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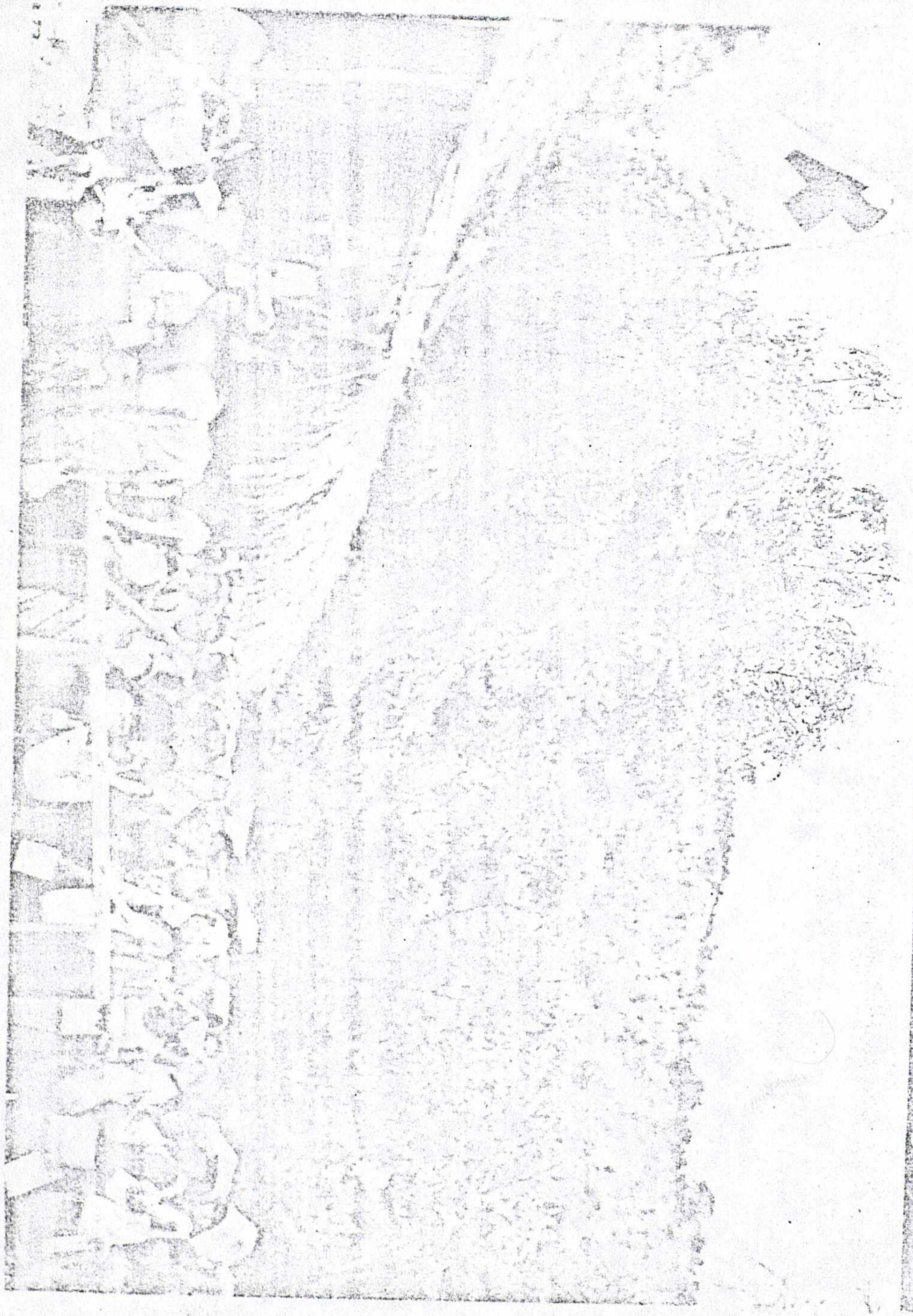

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THE EYEWITNESS

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Bitter moments in EAST-TIMOR jungles

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THE EYEWITNESS

By

Arsenio Ramos Horta

Bitter moments in EAST TIMOR jungles

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FOREWORD

I WANTED TO WRITE THIS "MEMOIR" ABOUT MY OWN EXPERIENCE OF THREE YEARS IN THE JUNGLES OF EAST TIMOR, MOST OF THE TIME AS A PRISIONER AND SOME TIMES JUST AS A FREE MAN, IN ORDER TO LET THE THOUSANDS OF RELATIVES OF THE PRISIONERS WHO WERE MASSACRED BY FRETILIN BETWEEN THE YEARS OF 1975 TO 1978, KNOW ABOUT THE SUFFERINGS AND HARDSHIPS THEIR BELOVED ONES HAD ENDURED, AS FAR AS THEY ALSO SUFFERED LIKE MYSELF. A FEW OF US HAD SURVIVED BUT THE MAJORITY WERE CHOPPED DOWN BY FRETILIN GUNS, AND BURIED AWAY IN COMMON GRAVES OR IN UNKNOWN SPOTS OF THIS BEAUTIFUL ISLAND, THAT BECAME BLOODY RED SPATED DURING THE SHORT PERIOD OF FRETILIN DOMINATION.

VIOLENCE AND EXTORSIONS WERE ORDERS OF THE DAY. UNTIL THE EAST TIMORESE POPULATION REACTED AGAINST SUCH REGIME OF TERROR AND ASKED FOR THE CLOSEST NEIGHBOUR TO ASSIST THEM TO GET RID OF FRETILIN. THUS, IT ENDED THE ERA OF TERROR, BLOODSHED AND SUFFERINGS. ONCE THE CRITICAL CONDITIONS OF EAST TIMOR HAD EASED THE PEOPLE OF EAST TIMOR CHOSE TO LIVE TOGETHER WITH HIS NEAREST NEIGHBOUR AND BE PART OF INDONESIA NATION. SINCE THEN, EAST TIMOR IS ENJOYING A STEADY PROGRESS IN THE VARIOUS SECTORS OF MODERN LIFE.

IN MY POINT OF VIEW, I AM SURE THAT, IN THE YEARS TO COME, EAST TIMOR WILL BE OUT OF ITS BACWARDNESS AND STAND PROUDLY DEVELOPED.

Arsénio Ramos Horta

11/9/81.—

WHAT WAS FRETILIN CULTURE ....

Six months after Cyclone Tracy hit Darwin on Christmas 1974 I decided to take some holidays to see my relatives here in Timor. It was July 1975. So I caught a T.A.A. flight from Darwin to Dili.

I was very happy to see my brother who was already a Public Servant and my younger sisters just finished Primary School with good marks.

At the time, July 1975, everybody was talking about politics and young people or older ones would gather in the street or else in the bars to talk about politics and revolution. The Fretilin simpatizers, were usually young boys, most of them unemployed, were very extremist in their ideas and they usually wanted the expulsion of the Portuguese, and an immediate independence, while the U.D.T. simpatizers, just wanted more opportunity for the Timorese and maintain long-term links with Portugal before any opportunity for independence. Apodeti simpatizers, as I could notice in several occasions, they would stand neutral during the discussions as they wanted to reunite with their historical brothers and be incorporated into Indonesia.

I have a brother Jose Manuel Ramos Horta, who was a founder member of Fretilin. I had the opportunity to meet most of the Fretilin leaders, who were mostly my school mates, and the more leftist extremist ones were five or six of them who lost their scholarship in Portugal for lack of improvements. Those boys were talking about Mao's Doctrine as their political program and they would stir up the population to react against the Portuguese. They promised such things to the people that one who can think just a little, would be convinced that the Fretilin leaders just wanted to create unrest among the people and start an era without law. After talking with Xavier Do Amaral the Fretilin Chairman, and Vicente Reis a drop out, a top ranking Fretilin leader, I was convinced that Fretilin was unable to carry out what they had promised to the people. And also they were under educated to be leaders in any Government, regardless of its political faction.

Once Xavier Do Amaral told me, that after the independence the people would not pay taxes, the medical service will be free (Timor has no doctors of its own), education will be free. According to Xavier Mao Tse Tung will provide for everything Timor will need.

I have my brother-in-law John Carrascalao who was a leader of U.D.T., the party which wanted to maintain links with Portugal. I found their program more reasonable to carry out, but it was frustrated by the Portuguese Government that wanted to abandon Timor as it was a burden.

On August 10, 1975 U.D.T. made a coup d'Etat to protest against the presence in Timor of two Portuguese Army officials, who were known as communists. Few days later those two officials Major Mota and Major Jonatas were evacuated, and Fretilin simpatizers started to shoot at U.D.T. guards. Then I decided to join U.D.T. Forces.

By 15th of August street fighting had spread in many areas of Dili. Some units of the regular army joined U.D.T. and others joined Fretilin. Thus the fighting became very hot and casualties had started. News from Remexio said a Fretilin group assaulted the Chinese shop there and killed all the family. More news coming from Maubisse, Laclubar told us about barbarities committed by Fretilin groups were astonishing, but later confirmed during my imprisonment by the killers themselves.

On August 20, 75 Fretilin made the counter coup, and assisted by the Portuguesse Army, they started to hit the U.D.T. Headquarters with mortar fire. We still resisted for a week, but were forced to leave Dili, in face of Fretilin superior number and weapons. All along the way from Dili to Maubara, we gave hard fight. At Rai-Cotu, an area about ten miles from Dili, we put a strong resistance for a week, then finally we backed from there, due to heavy shelling of a patrol ship given to Fretilin by the Portuguese Government. From then on, U.D.T. forces started to slowly heading towards the frontier, always resisting the continuous advance. In Maubara, 45 miles from Dili U.D.T. leaders made the decision to ask support from Indonesia. By 13th of September, myself and three companions were ambushed by Fretilin patrol, two were killed. They took us to the village of Maubara. My mate was killed that night, and I was taken to Dili the next day, 14th of September where I was jailed in the military prison. On the 15th of September I started to work as interpreter for an Australian technician who tried to repair Radio Marconi – Dili until he left for his country on the 29th of September. As payment for my work, Rogerio Lobato, then Commander-in-Chief of Fretilin forces (a former lieutenant of Portuguese Army) ordered that I be given 20 leather whippings across my back, about midnight which I received with tears and screams.

A little later Hermenegildo, the second Commander (former sergeant of Portuguese Army) came into the jail. He was drunk. All the prisoners knew that the leather strap was going to kiss again someone's back, as it is usual at Hermenegildo's visits. It was my turn. I was called out, then Alves put the music on and started to insult me, I did not respond, then he lashed me for several times. My back got burning hot. I cried and screamed, calling, Mommy, and then hit my legs and jumped and they laughed enjoying the torture. Those torturers, I could not sleep because of pains.

In the jail beatings and insulting of prisoners had been going on in spite of appeals by the International Red Cross representative and also an order of Fretilin President Xavier Do Amaral to stop such maltreatments, but no one respected it, signs of weakness and absence of responsibility. It was more ridiculous that the member of Fretilin Central Committee were the first one to breach what they had decided, even Xavier Do Amaral himself. On a Sunday visit he had told us, that if we did not behave properly he would tell his men to blow up the prison with all of us inside. All the prisoners in Dili jail lived in a state of permanent fear, because any night could be his unlucky night. One day Alarico Fernandes (the terror of prisoners) and Leopoldo came to jail. Alarico made a nice speech in which he promised that the brutal treatments would be finished from then on, and they were going to start with inquiries in order to release many of us. Then they left, but a little later Alarico came back alone. He went straight to Mr. Maggiolo's cell (former Police Chief) and for the reason that Maggiolo's did not stand up to greet him, Alarico kicked and punched Maggiolo so brutally that sent poor old Maggiolo to hospital with several broken ribs.

The time passed by ...., the day Mr. Lopez Da Cruz had been promising over the Radio was getting nearer.

Sunday, 7th December 1975, early morning, the first contingent of Indonesian volunteers were dropped in Dili. Some of my fellow prisoners had luck to see the parachuters. We all got the feeling that the day of freedom had come. At about 8 a.m. a Fretilin Commander, Jesus Soares, passed by the window, where his father prisoner stood. He said he felt sorry for us, then he added that Fretilin leaders had decided to blow up the prison building with all prisoners inside, and Carmo, also Commander, was preparing the explosives. But God did not want our death.

At about 10 a.m. Natalino Leitao and Solan, both Fretilin members came to pick me up, and I was driven to the hospital, where I joined Alarico Fernandes in a room trying to contact by radio The Australian Red Cross. But he was so frightened at the time, thus he couldn't understand he was speaking with Darwin Tower Control, so he passed me the microphone. After receiving instructions on how to contact the Australian Red Cross, I gave back the mike to Alarico, I could see he felt easier when he spoke with the Red Cross. Alarico told Red Cross that Indonesia had invaded in full scale the city of Dili, with paratroops and Marines and he asked Red Cross to arrange some sort of transport for evacuation. But Red Cross did not promise anything and said it was better for Fretilin to contact the Australian Government over the Radio V.J.Y. After that, by 11 a.m. we got into a "pick up" heading to Aileu, where we arrived by late afternoon. Alarico contacted again the Red Cross at night, insisting to evacuation request. The Red Cross operator told him he was going to talk with his superiors and hang up. So I had to watch all night, waiting for news while Alarico went to sleep. As I didn't have any food my stomach was aching. Next morning Alarico contacted again the Red Cross, still insisting on evacuation. While he was talking, Xavier Do Amaral came in, took the mike from Alarico, and he also talked with Australian Red Cross, telling that Indonesian war planes were machine gunning civilian population, which was completely false. I was there. In fact the plane flew over Aileu dropping only leaflets.

At 8 a.m. I couldn't stand any more of starving, because I had no food since the previous day, over twenty four hours without food. But he said that a revolutionary did not think about food while working. So I just shut up, but I knew that Alarico had eaten. On the night of 7th December 1975 I did not sleep nor eat, not even a cup of coffee, I just sat in front of the radio tuned to Darwin Red Cross, waiting for a reply over evacuation that never came. While Alarico and others were sleeping with full stomach, I felt so miserable that night, with empty stomach, suffering from the cool temperature of Aileu just with a thin shirt. When the morning broke out, I was so tired and angry that food was an obsession; Xavier and Alarico woke up at 5.30 a.m. and they asked me about news. They were disappointed about my negative reply. They smoked and talked for a while, ordered milk and bread from the kitchen for them, while I just looked at the milk, I wished them they will get dysentery. At about 8 a.m., they left, so did I, with Mario Soares for a breakfast at his home. After that I went back to the radio, just stayed there till afternoon, when Alarico came back to tell me that we had to leave Aileu immediately. So I packed up the radio and its equipment, put in the car and we went to have dinner at a house where my mother and sisters were staying with Leopoldo and family and Alarico's wife. We left Aileu by midnight for Fatu-Bossa, the trip was difficult, because of muddy roads, and the car got bogged many times and I had to shovel free the car. Sometimes, it got free just to get bogged again a few yards ahead. It was nearly morning when we arrived there. It was only some ten miles from Aileu. My mother prepared rice with vegetables for breakfast. At 8 a.m., Alarico contacted V.J.Y., asking for information over the Australian Government position regarding the invasion, but the V.J.Y. operator said, she could not say anything, because she was only a radio operator and not a Government officer. At that time Antonio Belo called Alarico on the same frequency. Then they decided to contact again at 2 p.m. So, that afternoon Alarico contacted Belo again, who passed a code message from Rogerio Lobato. As soon as it finished Alarico himself took the message to Aileu, to decipher it. He came back late and very disappointed. He insulted Lobato, because the message was just to greet the Fretilin Forces, while Alarico expected some instruction to receive help from outside, because in their conversation in the morning, Belo mentioned under water fish swimming towards Timor, which gave an impression that a help from Red China was on the way.

Next day, 9th of December, Alarico gave me an envelop to take it to Nicolau Lobato in Aileu; it was a proposal to convert the area of Same into a neutral zone, under the supervision of Australian Government and with the assistance from International Red Cross. Nicolau convened a meeting of all Fretilin members who were in Aileu at the time (Carvarino, Carlos Caesar, Helio Pina, Solan, Vicente, Feliciano de Fatima, and Silva — Aileu Military Commander). After Nicolau read the proposal, all of them rejected it. Carlos Caesar said Alarico was a frightened man, he added, if China and Tanzania will soon send aid, why did they need a neutral zone ? He was supported by the rest of them, which made me convinced that Fretilin members were a bunch of stupid fellows, who would imagine foreign countries involving themselves in this domestic misunderstanding.

Here in Aileu, I learned that Xavier had told many people that Australia will send helicopters for evacuation. While those poor people were waiting for the helicopters that never came, Xavier had rode on horse to his hometown in Turiscai. After lunch I went back to Fatobossa. As I rode on an Army Unimog, the trip wasn't so difficult, I gave the answer to Alarico; he became very upset, and started cursing and calling Nicolau and others stupid suiciders, on the 10 December 1975. Despite disapproval from Nicolau, Alarico sent the proposal to Australian Government via radio V.J.Y. but never got an answer.

My mother was preparing breakfast, then Mize, Alarico's daughter did something funny to her, my mom smacked her twice, which made Alarico so cranky that he took the G3 to shoot mom and my sister Mary, but Policarpo, a Fretilin Unit Commander intervened. A hot discussion broke out between the two who were gripping their guns. After many exchanges of insults, cursings, threats, Alarico calmed down, while I just sat watching, because I was a prisoner. My eyes full of tears, impotent to do anything for my mother and my mind went for my brothers who were working for Fretilin, and still, he has no consideration from Fretilin leaders, I expected at least Alarico should have a bit more respect for the mother of a colleague, from then, I could foresee the hard times ahead and months later Alarico became a murder. After lunch, Alarico told my mother she must stay in Fatu-Bossa, while I had to go with him. That afternoon we left for Maubisse in a pick up, Alarico and his family, Leopoldo and Fernando Pedruco, all working for Alarico's Department.

We spent about two weeks in Maubisse, Nicolau arrived there one night and prepared a document in which he gave full power to Mari Alkatiri to deal matter concerning Fretilin in foreign countries, such document was transmitted via V.J.Y. Radio.

Here in Maubisse I was told about the killing of many prisoners along the road Dili – Aileu and in Aileu itself. The Fretilin commander of Maubisse Januario Soares said, he himself and two other fighters were killing between five to eight prisoners every night. On the night of 26 December 1975 Fretilin men executed 68 prisoners in Aileu. I was told by Feliciano de Fatima, a Fretilin Central Committee member. Eduardo Dos Anjos, Fretilin Minister for Public Works and Telecom, said he ordered the shooting of fifteen persons in Erbissa, accused of spying. A Chinese Fretilin fighter whose name was Lay (from Maubisse) had killed very many people who wanted to go back to Dili, according to Lay himself who told proudly about his executions. All those massacres were carried out with knowledge of Nicolau himself.

When the Combined Forces captured the town of Aileu, we left for Same, staying three days in Hola-Rua and moved on to Akadiru-Tetuk, spending January there, until the Combined Forces landed in Betano. Combined Forces consisted of the U.D.T., Apodeti, Trabalhista Kotta partisans and the Indonesian Volunteers.

During that period, Alarico was busy fabricating false news, sending to Australia and addressed to several Foreign Embassies through Radio V.J.Y. Those news were completely false because I had to assist Alarico in fabricating such informations. During January, Alarico insisted with Belo to arrange a transport to enable him to get away from Timor. It was a secrecy that only I and Leopoldo knew about it. When we hear that U.N. Envoy Guiciardi was going to visit Same to contact Fretilin, Alarico planned to hijack the plane, but no Guiciardi was ever seen in Same. It was during January that Alarico met Nicolau Lobato, and they decided to eliminate all remnants of Apodeti prisoners. When the Combined Forces landed in Betano, we moved to Tutoluro. Just before leaving, Mize asked me a rubber, I did not give it to her. She cried, making Alarico so furious that he ordered some men to tie me up with ropes for an hour. Then I was relieved from the strings and forced to follow them. I asked Alarico to allow me to assist my mother, but he refused permission, thus forcing my old Mom to abandon some of her bags. We arrived in Tutoluro by night and we had good dinner there with goat meat and palm wine. Next day, Alarico himself beat up a man named Mario, who was accused of spying. He stopped beating, when the little man fell unconscious, bleeding and broke his left arm. Then Fernando Pedruco told him the accusation was false, because Mario was working for Alarico as a domestic servant and so it was impossible he could contact with the Combined Forces. When Alarico realized it, he just told the cook to give Mario some water.

First week of February 1976 Combined Forces captured the town of Same. In Australia – the authorities apprehended the illegal Fretilin Radio operating in Darwin. In the village of Same a Fretilin activist – Lito Gusmao killed the following prisoners: Aguido Inacio and his brother Rogerio Inacio, Geronimo Maher and his brother Rui Maher, Jose Antonio and Jose Santos Faisca. Carlos Caesar, a Fretilin Central Committee member and few other killers, massacred over 70 prisoners housed in a school. After the slaughter, Carlos said that those killed had decided to make a counter coup; it is unconceiveable that a group of starving people would think of coups.

Caesar merely wanted to execute his brutal massacre, but I hope that one day he'll face the law. On the other hand, Nicolau Lobato ordered the execution of twenty prisoners in Hola-Rua for the simple reason that there were not enough men to guard them; some of the condemned were shot while others were killed with swords and arrows.

When the Combined Forces captured the town of Same, we moved to Fahi-Nehan, spending overnight in Dia-Buco. Next morning Alarico contacted V.J.Y., which instructed him to contact Antonio Belo in a Portuguese war vessel in Darwin. But for some reason or boycott from the Portuguese, we could hear Belo, but he could not hear Alarico. At that time the U.N.Envoy Mr. Guiciardi was still in Darwin, expecting contact to Fretilin with radio, but as the attempts had failled Mr. Guiciardi left for home. Alarico nearly went mad because of that failure. He insulted everybody, including his own wife. Then he started to tremble and suddenly he collapsed. I was very happy thinking that Alarico had passed away but it was only a nerve breakdown. By afternoon Alarico woke up in a terrible mood and we were ordered to march on to Fahi-Nehan. Here we camped in the local chapel. My mother and sisters also came along, but they stayed at Teofilo Do Amaral's house. He was the Area Secretary, a nice man, who was killed by Nicolau's men in the 1977 for taking part in the movement against Nicolau, headed by Xavier Do Amaral. Here in Fahi-

Nehan another Fretilin member Arthur Nascimento joined the radio team. This man had brought his wife, sister-in-law and mother.

Few days after we had arrived to Fahi-Nehan, a group of 42 prisoners who had escaped from all the massacres in Aileu, Maubisse and Same, arrived also there. I could not help myself from crying, by seeing all those poor mates in a so miserable state. Some had only a stripe of cloth, over their sexes and all were skinny. I had talks with many of them. The ordeals they went through, it was terrifying, the nights when their next fellow was picked up to get killed outside, wondering when will it happen to him. Days and nights without food, beating sessions through the night, the cries of agony of the ones being beaten. They had made the trip from Dili to Same carrying ammunition boxes of 30 kg with only a small meal a day. In all the prisons they passed, they would lose a lot of friends taken away by the murderous Fretilin guards. There among the group of 42 I met my old neighbours and good friends, Egas Lemos, Henrique Simoes, Adelino Simoes, Bacano and Jose Cordeiro. Whenever possible I would give them some tobacco, maize, red beans and once I gave them a bottle of pig fat, which made them so happy that after three years, we met again in Dili they still remember it.

By Februari 1976 we still had no contact with Antonio Belo. All the informations were passed to Australia via Radio V.J.Y. Darwin. Alarico visited the jail once, in Fahi-Nehan. There he met Alexandre Lemos, a radio technician who was prisoner because he was not a Fretilin simpatizer. As Alarico needed someone to fix the antena he decided to bring Alexandre to the radio team, and he fixed up the antena of one radio which I spoilt in Maubisse. By then we started to work on Radio Maubere, but without much success because it could be heard only in a small radius. After some more trials it became a little better. This Alexandre Lemos was killed in September 1977, by Alarico himself, because he was playing around with Alarico's wife. By the end of February, Antonio Belo contacted again Alarico. This time he sent a code message from Rogerio Lobato, it urged Alarico to start preparing a landing strip in Ue-Berek. The same message said that a mini jet plane would fly from Vietnam carrying military equipment to Fretilin, but that plane never landed there. My brother Jose Ramos Horta also contacted once with Alarico, but just told him that he was in Australia and about to leave for America.

At that time Radio Maubere used to go on air every night.My task was to listen to several foreign radio stations, make translations into Portuguese, so Alarico could choose and put in his own words, before going on air. By the beginning of March 1976 we moved to Caicassa where Alexandre Lemos managed to get a dipole aeria of about 12 meters long, which increased the power. By that time, Alarico received instructions for the constructions of the air strip, from Rogerio Lobato. So one day I went with Alarico to Fatu-Berliu, in order to see the works. We took with us a radio transmitter and a transistor receiver to contact with Caicassa and Australia. We rode on horses to Fatu-Berliu. We got there by lunch time and had lunch at the old chief Antonio Da Costa's house. It was a great lunch with rice, salt, meat and palm wine. The food was served in glass plates and cups. Well, Alarico was a Minister, I had not seen glass or salt for more than three months. After lunch Alarico called Caicassa, but he could not contact Lemos.

By four o'clock we rode to Alarico's relatives in Rai Mutin. It rained on the way, but as a compensation we had quite a good dinner with palm wine and we had good beds to sleep on. Next morning we woke up early and Alarico contacted the V.J.Y. Radio just to show to the people in Rai-Mutin, that he was a man with the radio, as here in these areas the people never saw any two way radios and who ever speak English is an important person. After breakfast, Alarico decided to go back to Fatu-Berliu where we stopped again at Antonio Da Costa's house for lunch. This old Antonio da Costa died from starvation in 1978. Soon after lunch Alarico called Caicassa and he was informed by Alexandre Lemos that his daughter Mize was sick, so Alarico forgot about the air-strip and we went back to Caicassa under heavy rain.

Once in Caicassa we saw Mize well, the sickness was arranged by Mrs. Alarico just to have her husband back.

By mid March, Nicolau Lobato and few other members of Fretilin Central Committee passed by Caicassa heading to Fatu-Berliu with Alarico joining them. They gathered in Fatu-Berliu for a week. During that week we had a good time back in Caicassa, as the bloody presence of Alarico would drive away the local population. As soon as he left, I and Fernando Pedruco went to a village nearby. We bought two chickens and a bamboo of palm wine, and we had a good time. After dinner we put the cassette recorder player on and Fernando Pedruco started to dance with Lita (Alarico's wife). As they danced very close, Fernando started to kiss Lita and she was enjoying it. So Fernando carressed and fondled her. When they reached the point to go to bed, Little Mize (Alarico's daughter) woke up and called her mother and so the romance finished, which made Fernando going mad and trying to break everything. For a week we had always good dinners and Lita after that night started to pay more attention to Alexandre Lemos and a forbidden love affair developed between them. Such love affair ended a year later with the assassination of Alexandre by Alarico himself when he found out the affair.

When the meeting in Fatu-Berliu ended, Alarico came back to Caicassa in very bad mood. Next morning he sent a code message to Rogerio Lobato via Antonio Belo. Later I learned it was a request to send military aid as soon as possible. Then he talked about the meeting, saying that no important decisions were taken. It decided only to hold a larger meeting in May, with the participation of all Fretilin members and Commanders. He also said that during the meeting some male members engaged themselves in sexual activities with some female members, which made two women Soi-Mali the top women of OPMT (Organizacao Popular de Mulher Timor) and Jalinda got pregnant. It was also agreed that female members should kiss male member on greeting. After lunch we sat for smoking, as I did not ask his permission for smoking he insulted me and ordered a guard to put in jail, giving the reason that I did not respect a Fretilin member and Minister. The jail term was 15 days, but two days later Alarico called me back to rejoin the group and we moved to Fuka-Dare-Hum in Fatu-Berliu. It was by the end of March 1976. That time Leopoldo decided to separate from Alarico, so he took his family to Barike. On our way we stopped overnight in Mane-Hat where we met Nicolau Lobato and Hata (Hamis Bassarewan) who talked over Radio Maubere that night. Next, myself and Pedruco were told to go first to look after the accommodations in Fuka-Dare-Hum. By the afternoon the rest of the group joined us. The accommodations there were not bad, as we had water just a few steps away, five bamboo cabins and there was enough food. It was April 1976. Alexandre Lemos made telephone line linked to Alas – Fatu-Berliu – Soibada – Barike – Laclubar – Kribas. On the 7th I had the visit of my brother Nuno who came from Lobito, somewhere in the Ossu area. I was very happy to see him and I was willing to go with him, but I was needed to stay with the radio team, as far as no one else could write or speak English as I.

Next day Nicolau Lobato accompanied by his bodyguards, also came to Fuka-Dare-Hum in order to prepare the agenda for the coming meeting in Soibada. Then they left. By the second week of April, I heard over Radio Australia, a statement made by Mr. Adam Malik. The Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs saying that by August Fretilin will be wiped out. I translated to Alarico who said that Mr. Malik was mad and knew nothing about politics. In return I commented that Mr. Malik as a Foreign Affairs Minister should know a lot about politics. Then a discussion flared up between myself, Alarico, Arthur Nascimento and Fernando Pedruco backing my point of view. Alarico and Arthur tried to convince us that Mr. Malik had no knowledge of politics. In response we said that besides being Minister, Mr. Malik was a time Chairman of U.N. General Assembly, so the man must be a brilliant diplomat, which made Alarico so up set. He started to break everything on the table. When he tried to grab the gun I held the arms but he was assisted by the guards and got freed. Then he ordered them to tie me and Fernando with ropes to a tree in order to shoot us, under accusation of traitors to Fretilin. But his wife and daughter cried, begged him not to shoot us and when Alarico aimed at me, his wife put herself in front of the gun, so Alarico gave up, but we were tied to the trees for well over two hours, before being released. At night he called me and Pedruco for explanation, saying that we were right, but we should not defend Mr. Malik or any other Indonesian leader in front of many people. We just shut up, because it would be senseless to argue again with Alarico. There were no other people besides us, the radio team. Few days after that dangerous and rediculous event five men brought three persons to Alarico, they were accused of being wizards. After a short interrogation, Alarico condemned the three men to death, because Fretilin consider God and witchery as enemy. The three men were taken to a river and be headed. By night, Pedruco told me that Alarico's attitude was very stupid, because among the Timorese people, whenever a question comes up, the stronger party would tell any needed lies to get rid of their rivals. Pedruco added that in his many years as Civil Administrator he had experienced in such questions.

Few days after that event a chap named Augusto Vaz joined the radio team as news reader. At that time Alarico was suffering from headaches and insomnia, so he consulted a traditional doctor named John Varudo who told Alarico not to wash or take coffee after getting up next morning before treatment. That John told him it was an easy disease. Thus he needed only to be touched. So next morning John hit Alarico from his feet to his head which made Alarico worse than before. The traditional doctor was from Lequidoe, a village near Dili. He had some coloured water, he claimed to have good effects against many deseases, and on top of that, the man could use a syringe. So he made a good business in Fatu-Berliu, as he was quick to leave as soon as he knew he was loosing credibility. When he finally left, he took with him eight men accused of being wizards. Those ones were also condemned to death despite Pedruco intervention, saying the eight men were innocent. But Alarico was firm in his concept, that whoever practised witchcraft was an enemy of the Timor people, enemy of Fretilin revolution. Thus he deserved death.

Meanwhile, some of my prison mates had arrived from Fahi-Nehan. They were Antonio Lemos and his son Egas Lemos and Antonio Moniz.

By the end of April Alarico and his wife left for Soibada accompanied by Alexandre Lemos and his bodyguard Salvador Fernandes. They were going to stay away for long time in Soibada for the meeting. Arthur Nascimento took charge of the radio for the time. I had to get food for all of us. It was easy. I gave a Mauser Riffle to a Fretilin militia to hunt dears and pigs, and exchanged the meat for manioc, maize and rice, as at that time we used to have a lot of meat we could get palm wine easily and we had a really good time while Alarico was away. Some of the village girls used to come around bringing manioc and maize and in return we gave them love and meat.

The meeting in Soibada began on the 24th of April and ended on the 30th of May. During that meeting, Fretilin member wrote down a constitution based on Mao's principles, divided the island in sectors with a political commissioner for each sector assisted by a commander, and each sector divided in committees in such confusing names I never understood. Alarico became Minister for Information, Internal Administration and Security. It was formed a permanent Committee by Xavier Do Amaral, Nicolau Lobato, Carvarino Mau-Lear, Vicente Reis, Alarico, Hamis Bassarewan and Hermenegildo Alves.

On the 20th of May, the Fretilin members announced a general amnesty to the remnants of U.D.T. prisoners, as all the Apodeti prisoners have been killed to the last man.

On the 1st of June, Alarico came back to Fura-Dare-Hum with his wife and Alexandre Lemos brought along some copper wire, enabling him to build a better aerial , increasing the Radio Maubere.

By the first week of June 1976, the Combined Forces moved from Betano, captured the town of Alas and were advancing to Fatu-berliu to move to Ue-Kulo, where we stayed for two weeks. Meanwhile the Combined Forces had captured the town of Fatu-berliu. We had a very hard time there as our food-stock had diminished considerably. While the rest of us were on a starving diet, Alarico and his family were enjoying rice meals. So one night I stole from his room a quantity of rice, which relieved our aching stomach for a couple of days. Few days after we stationed in Ue-Kulo, Nicolau Lobato had come from Soibada with six men to guerilla fight the Combined Forces.

But, after studying the situation Nicolau gave up, due to face a better equiped force. From Ue-Kulo we moved to Has-Timur near Soi bada. During the March we had to carry very heavy load because there was not enough men around to help us. We stayed there two days before moving on to Krekmak-Lakan, where we had very little food. In the morning I was starving, so I did not salute Alarico which offended him so greatly that he punished me by cutting my ration for the day. While we were starving, Alarico had plenty of food, because he had money to buy. His wife told me, that by the end of November 1975, many relatives of the prisoners in Australia had sent money but Alarico decided to keep the money for himself.

Back in November 1975, an International Red Cross man had asked me in Dili prison if I had received any money from Australia. As I said I did not, the man became worried, and he said he was going to find out what had happened to money. Day after we arrived to Krekmak-Lakan Alarico sent Augusto Vaz and few other men to Malus-Hum in order to get instructions and informations from Nicolau Lobato. Alarico had the reply two days later in a letter sent from Hamis Bassarewan, Fretilin Minister for Education, who was with Nicolau Lobato, saying that the Combined Forces had overcome the Fretilin positions in Ue-Kulo and advised Alarico to move immediately away. As soon as he finished reading the letter, Alarico told us to pack up quickly and after distributing the cargoes among us, we were ready to move. Myself and old Fernando Pedruco had to carry a twelve volts accumulator which weighed over 50 pounds, plus our own belongings. We put a bamboo stick over the accumulator, and put on our shoulders to carry it. At hilly tracks the bouncing of the accumulator made our march very difficult. It was rainy season, so the track was wet and skiddy.

By lunch time, we both were exhausted but we had to keep going. Myself felt I could do it, but Fernando Pedruco was older, became really weak as by afternoon we had not eaten anything at all. To worsen our endurance, a big rain dropped on us. We had to cross the river Mota Sahen several times, endangering our lives in each crossing as the waters became more turbulent. After all the crossing we came to the foot hill leading finally to Malus-Hum. We rested there for a while. By then some men sent by Nicolau met us, and took our accumulator. My shoulders were so swolled I could not put anything on them. By ten o'clock we finally reached Nicolau's camp in Ue-Talas. But only at midnight we had our meal. It was a good meal with rice, manioc, meat and palm wine. Next morning after a good breakfast and palm wine we hit the way to Malus-Hum. The journey was a very hard one, as I had both my shoulders still swollen and had to carry some radio equipment and the track is always climbing. Sometimes the paths were so narrow, I and my fellows had to force the grass to go on. Only by afternoon we reached Malus-Hum. We were all starving, as on the way we ate nothing, but drinking only palm wine we took with us from Ue-Talas. Just before dark, Nicolau Lobato and Hamis Bassarewan finally arrived and then the local people served us a little of rice, manioc and deer meat and a lot of palm wine.

Next day, Joarquim Nascimento, Helio Pina and Manecas, arrived from Barike. We were pleased to see them as they were from Dili, originally. By afternoon the Fretilin members held a meeting for themselves, generally the Fretilin members spend a lot of time in senseless meeting. After the meeting, Helio Pina, Manelas and Joarquim Nascimento came to our barrack to drink palm wine and "Tua Sabu" a distilled palm wine of the region. As Alarico affected our lives being our boss, we conducted the conversation to Alarico's misbehaviours and the relations between him and ourselves. As the bamboo holding the palm wine got down, we became more overt in our stories of Alarico's attitude. At a certain point, Fernando Pedruco said that Alarico was a Filho da Puta, son of a bitch. Helio Pina got a bit upset to the insult, so he told Pedruco to draw his insult, but he insisted upon Alarico being a real son of a bitch. Then Pina said, he as a member of Fretilin Central Committee, would not allow such insult. So he warned Pedruco, he had to report to Alarico if Pedruco did not apologize. With all the palm wine he had drunk, and long-term hate against Alarico, Fernando Pedruco clearly and loudly said Alarico is a big son of a bitch. Then Helio Pina stood up and went to report to Alarico himself and Nicolau Lobato. Alarico became mad, hearing the report, he started cursing and threated to kill Pedruco. But Nicolau told him to calm down and solve the problem in an immediate meeting. So the meeting started immediately, being Nicolau the chairman. It was opened by Alarico, who started to call Pedruco a reactionary and a traitor as he admonished severely Fernando Pedruco, he lost his temper. So he stood up and walked towards Pedruco to hit him, but Nicolau intervened, cutting down an immediate disaster, as Alarico was younger and stronger than Pedruco.

This one respond, that we called Alarico a son of a bitch because of the event in Fura-Dare-Hum, when Alarico was about to shoot both of us. Then Alarico insulted him, and shouted so loudly that even Nicolau got so upset. He punched on the table so hard driving all of us to panick. After that Alarico cooled down. At certain point Helio Pina asked us if we terrified just by being with Alarico. All of us were unanimous to say we were terrified, even Arthur Nascimento confessed he was afraid of Alarico also. At the end Alarico drew his accusation that Fernando Pedruco was a Traitor and promised to change his attitudes. Nicolau to close the meeting said that according to May 20, 1976 amnesty, we were all free so whoever wanted to go home may do so, but he told me and Alexandre Lemos we could not leave, because we were needed at the radio. Next day Helio Pina left for Laclo with Antonio Lemos and his son Egas and Manoel Soares. The rest of us still stayed in Malus-Hum for another two days before moving to Aularen. At that place we stayed for about one week. During that week a lot of things happened. Two days after we sat camp there, the Combined Forces, advancing from Barike to Soibada, fire at a watching post, creating panick among us. Alarico ran away leaving his gun behind. He even forgot his wife and daughter. As we were hidden some two hundred meters away, we came back cautiously to the camp, to certify if the Combined Forces were in the camp, I arrived at the camp alone. I saw the pot with dried manioc cooking. I took all I could, and eating at the same time. Then I went back to report to Alarico that nothing had happened. We all came back to the camp. But the shooting had made us very afraid and so we were in high tension.

By lunch time I slipped away with Alexandre Lemos to grass to eat the manioc I had stolen in the morning. Then Alarico realized that we were overloaded with useless things such as old telephone sets and radio, a lot of wire and old batteries. He ordered us to dig a large hole to bury all the useless articles.

By afternoon, Alarico was contacting other Fretilin Centers with two way radio. I went to the water, once I was near the water I saw a man half hidden in the bush. As it was dark under all those bamboo trees I could not recognize the man, so I called out for him. As he did not answer, I thought he was a spy, so I ran up to the camp in great panick. When the rest of the group saw me running, they immediately jumped from where they were sitting or sleeping and disappeared into the jungle. That time Alarico left everything behind, including the radio, his gun and a brief case. Moments later we met at a spot half a mile from the camp. Alarico asked me if I saw any Indonesian soldier.

I told him I was not sure, but then Augusto Vaz said he even heard people speaking Bahasa Indonesia. That convinced Alarico, that everything was lost. So we moved forward to a hill side where we rested for a while. While there, came Salvador, Alarico's bodyguard running down the hill. As Salvador did not see us, Alarico whistled to him, and calling, Salvador, which made the short bodyguard sped down and disappeared in the high grass. Moments later, we saw Alexandre Lemos walking rapidly up the hill in front of us, then Alarico whistled again. Alexandre heard the whistling, he looked back, by the second whistle he also sped up the hill and soon disappeared from our view. Alarico then said, Alexandre used to be a cool man. So if he was afraid, that is sure the Combined Forces had taken our camp. So we had to move away. We descended the mountain, crossed the creek and climbed the next mountain, forcing our way through the high grass, cutting ourselves in the bamboo bunches. We reached the top of the mountain at dark, so Alarico decided to camp there. As no one had any blanket, but me, I had to lease my rain coat to Alarico, and kept the blanket for myself. It was really cool up there, so Fernando Pedruco, Alexandre and Augusto Vaz all joined me shacking the blanket. By dawn it started to rain. Not a heavy rain, but enough to soak that land. Thus I called the two little boys of Arthur Nascimento and his sister-in-law.

We put the two boys in the middle, Filomena sat by my side, so the temperature to rise steadily. And by daybreak, I got myself a girl friend. It was a bad time, but it was also a good time. The rain stopped, as the sun opened its way through the clouds. Once it was clear Alarico ordered me and Augusto Vaz to go out looking for help. As I knew the areas easily I found the camping spot of Antonio Lobato, Nicolaus' brother. He was there with some twelve other men and women. When we told him of the news, he was not surprised, because Salvador had reached him during the night, and they set off to check our camp in Au-Laran. I was sad to hear that nothing had happened; otherwise I would not go back with Alarico. Antonio offered us some manioc, goat meat and palm wine for breakfast. We left afterwards for Alarico, passing through Fatu-Chapeu, in our way back. At the abandoned barracks we saw few Manila ducks. Immediately I hit one with a stick, and put in my shoulder bag and head on to Au-Laran.

When I reported to Alarico, he got very angry with me, saying that it was my fault to panick all of them. Then I said he had his armed bodyguard to protect him, but he said if I would not shut up he would kill me at once, so I just shut up.

By late afternoon, Nicolau Lobato arrived with four armed men to set up security around our camp. Next day when I looked for the radio in which I used to hear the news, it was not there,I asked everyone about the radio, one of the security guard told me, Alarico's wife had given it to Joarquim Caldeira to take away. That made Alarico berserk so he pointed the gun at me and told me to go and get the radio back and if I did not find the radio I would be a dead man. Then he ordered an armed man to escort me to Joarquim's place. We walked for over an hour to get there. As I was hungry and thirsty it was very hard. Once we got to Joarquim's hiding place, I was received to know the radio was there. He gave us some manioc and distilled palm wine to satisfy us. On the way back I took with me some boiled manioc and goat meat and four hard boiled eggs. Back at the camp Alarico was received to see the radio. He gave me one piece of manioc, which I immediately ate. By afternoon as we had nothing to eat, I gave two eggs to the two little boys of Arthur Nascimento, a piece of manioc and meat to Alexandre Lemos. Then I made sign to Filomena to go to the bush. I met her moments later, and both enjoyed the rest of manioc, eggs, goat meat and distilled palm wine. The goat meat was hard. But it came down tastily. Filomena was happy with me, and we stayed hidden in the grass loving each other until we were satisfied.

Leopoldo Joarquim and some armed men had arrived from Feur-Rim by afternoon. He suggested to Alarico, we should move on to Feur-Rim, because he said it was safer there, and there was no problem about food. So the next day, we packed up, and moved to Au-Wain, where we stayed for two days. At Au-Wain, the local people gave us goat and manioc. From there Arthur Nascimento and all his family separated from us to take new assignment in Feu-Rim, thus I was separated from my loving Filomena. On the third day we continued our march to Tutorui-Tutum, staying there for over two weeks. Meanwhile, Cerilo Nunes a top Fretilin Commander has arrived from Lobito somewhere near Baucau with nine armed men to organize security in the area of Barike. He had brought eight Mauser Riffles. At Tutorui-Tutum we had the visit of Anibal Araujo from Viqueque. When the Combined Forces took over the village. Anibal came with Avung (a Chinese) known to be a mechanic, who took our batteries to charge using a Massey Ferguson Tractor they had hidden in Mik-Kaletek. From Tutorui-Tutum we moved again to Ai-Manu-Hum. Here we camped in a newly abandoned village, so we had the opportunity to shoot a lot of pigs and chickens. My lost weight increased rapidly with so many proteins. On the second night I was bitten by a centipede. It was painfull, I could not sleep all night. There in Ai-Manu-Hum, was the hiding place of Anibal. On the fourth day, before we moved to Feuk-Rin, arrived Joarquim Nascimento from Barike. As soon as he saw Anibal, he immediately started to insult him, calling him a traitor, a coward and a son of a bitch. Anibal got red from the sudden insults, so he jumped to Joarquim to punch him. But Alarico put himself in the middle to prevent a fight. As both men calmed down, Joarquim said he has called Anibal a traitor, because when the Combined Forces took over the village of Bari-Ue, he did not show up on time. Only few days after the Combined Forces had gone away, Anibal arrived there with his men.

In return, Anibal said he did not go on time, because he had to call all his men. After that incident we marched finally to Feur-Rim. It was the beginning of August 1976. Once at Feur-Rim we met Arthur Nascimento and other Fretilin local leaders. Leopoldo had come with us from Ai-Manu-Hum.

We rested there for a while eating fresh coconut then we moved to Casabais where we would stay for one month. The foot path leading to Casabais was all the way climbing. We had to carry many things on our own shoulders, while Alarico only carried his gun. At a certain point Fernando Pedruco could not move any more, so I took his cargo.

Thus enabled him to go on. We reached the top of Casabais by afternoon. We were lodged in an old hut, while Alarico and his family in a separated hut. Soon after our arrival, Leopoldo's wife (Magdalena) served us a hot meal with salt, which we had not tasted for several weeks. Few days after our arrival, Nicolau Lobato and Hermenegildo Alves Soares accompanied by over fifteen armed men arrived at our camp. While all those Fretilin puppets were there, Leopoldo managed to get some distilled palm wine and for two days we were all drunk and half sober, except Nicolau, because he was suffering from Tipho. Then they left Casabais. Our stay in Casabais was quite pleasant, thanks to Leopoldo's ability to get meat, sago, maize, manioc and sometimes rice.

Here I would like to tell a small incident that happened the next day in Casabais during breakfast. As usual Alarico gets up very late. Around eleven o'clock we had breakfast; there were peeled sweet potatoes, among manioc and sago. Immediately I stretched my hands to a yellow potato, but Alarico's wife smecked my hand saying: "Hey, you do not touch the potatoes. They are reserved to comrade minister." Well it's useless to say I had to get happy with manioc and sago. That incident was seen by Leopoldo's wife.

The next day, Leopoldo's wife put a lot of sweet potatoes on the bamboo table and said in a loud voice, "all these potatoes are for all of you. So you can eat and get bursted." Alarico's wife turned red with that remark but said nothing. From that time on the Alarico's wife never saw Magdalena with good eyes again. Few days later they had a bitter argument, nearing a fight, but it was prevented with interference of Fernando Pedruco.

On the twentieth of August, some relatives of Alarico came from We-Bicas to visit him, bringing rice and honey, and they said in We-Bicas there was a lot of rice. With such good news, Alarico's wife convinced him to move there, expecting to have rice meals everyday. Thus, Alarico told his relatives to come back a week later to take them there. So a week later Alarico's relatives came back with three horses to get them.

On the twenty ninth of August we left Casabais. As we descended the mountain to Feuk-Rin, everyone walked on foot, but once in Feuk-Rin, Alarico's wife jumped on a horse and their daughter was carried on the third horse with their cousin John Brito. While myself, Alexandre Lemos and Augusto Vaz had to walk, carrying a lot of heavy radio equipment, to the pleasure of Alarico's wife, because she never liked me or Augusto Vaz. Alexandre Lemos pretexting illness, he walked freely, but we knew, Alexandre was enjoying the favours of Mrs. Alarico, since march, when they started a dangerous love affair. In Casabais, Fernando Pedruco stayed behind. On the previous day he pretended to be sick with malaria. He disguised so well he convinced Alarico.

The march to We-Bikas was very tiring, under the hot sun, walking most of the time in the dried river bed. By two or three o'clock we stopped at the river Mota Sahen to rest. There, people were waiting for us; they had killed a goat and roasted it with some manioc. Alarico's wife was the one who made the distribution so I and Augusto Vaz got only a very tiny portion. It was the beginning of reign of that bitch as the queen of kitchen. It was going to be very hard for me and Augusto Vaz. At Mota Sahen the waiting people took some of our cargo, which made the last leg of the journey more comfortable, despite the foot track was covered with tall grass. By later afternoon we finally reached We-Bikas. The local people had made some bamboo barracks for us.

As soon as we arrived some girls gave us coffee and fried manioc. There was a lot of coffee so I served myself generously with that black liquid without sugar. After some words of thanks by Alarico, the people dispersed. I went to the water to wash myself without soap of course. By around eight o'clock the same people came back to our camp bringing food. It consisted of boiled goat meat, rice and sago. As a matter of fact there was more sago than rice, so what Alarico's relatives tales of abundance of rice seemed to be false. Well, but as there was salt it did not matter. After dinner, Alarico ordered us to set the radio. It was not the day for Radio Maubere to go on air, but Alarico wanted to show to the people there, he was an important person, who knew how to work with a radio. As the antenna has not been fixed yet, he just spoke to the microphone, playing the role of a fool artist. Next day, Alexandre Lemos put the antenna up.

By the eight of September, Nicolau Lobato arrived there with Hamis Bassarewan, followed by Vicente Reis, Hermenegildo Alves, Alopoldo Joarquim, Anibal Araujo, Joarquim Nascimento and Guido Soares. They had gathered in We-Bikas to solve the misunderstanding between Anibal and Joarquim Nascimento and to get fresh news from Alarico. As all those Fretilin leaders gathered, the local people brought palm wine everyday during their stay, but rice never appeared again, since the first dinner. As the palm wine came in a large quantity we were happy.

On the twelfth of September, Hermenegildo Alves got drunk and insulted Alarico, who in turn punched Hermenegildo on the head knocking him to the ground. Then Hermenegildo got a stick and hit Alarico on the backside. But the fight did not go on, because Nicolau woke up and stopped the fight. While they were fighting, the rest of the team wished his death. On the thirteenth of September I asked Nicolau to allow me to go to see my mother and sisters in Barike. But Nicolau told me, I should ask Alarico as he was my boss. So I asked Alarico for permission. After a lot of arguments he finally agreed to let me go. So by afternoon I told Nicolau about that. I was planning to leave next day. In the morning, Alarico sent me a note. Remember that the distance between his barrack and ours is only some thirty yards apart. The note came in English, saying that I could not leave, because my subtitute was on the way. I got very, very upset. It was my birthday 14th of September. I decided to report to Nicolau. As soon as I saw Nicolau, I told him about the last decision of Alarico, showing him the note, telling Nicolau I could not bear Alarico. He usually behave like that, taking a decision now to change soon afterwards. Nicolau told me to understand Alarico as he was overloaded with responsibility. Then I told Nicolau, if I could not go to see my family I rather go with him than stay with Alarico. So Nicolau said he was going to see what he could do for me.

After breakfast, Nicolau called Alarico, Hamis and Vicente Reis and they talked for over an hour. At the end Nicolau called me to tell about the decision. I was to go to see my family for two weeks, then I had to go on to Wai Mari to learn politics with Vicente Reis. He said my problem arised because I did not know anything about revolutionary politics. Well, I need not to say it was a wise decision, and I was anxious to get away. For me it was a great birthday gift. Soon after I left with Joarquim Nascimento back to Barike, spending the night in We-Tenente. As my Filomena was in We-Tenente working in the rice fields I stayed there for one week. That week was very pleasant.

At night I heard Radio Dili, and my fiancee who I do not want to mention her name here, because she got married to another man, sent a music, which sadened a bit the joy of Filomena. But it was not difficult for her cheer up again. The time that I had to leave We-Bikas, I was sad to leave. But I hit the way to Feuk-Rin, arriving in Cassabais by late afternoon. There I met Leopoldo and family and my old friend Fernando Pedruco. I stayed at Leopoldo's for a couple of days, then I made journey to Barike on foot, accompanied by a local man to lead the way. We passed Soibada, where I spent four years in my Primary Education in the Catholic College there. In Soibada I stayed four days with Antonio Lobato. Nicolau's mother was also there. I could witness the starvation there, as many people had not food and had to rely on wild fruits and some eatable roots, which caused many death from dysentery.

From Soibada I went on to Kamedar to meet Vicente Reis. I stopped over a night in Dau-Lorol where a little girl died and thus there were a lot of palm wine and meat. It is a tradition here in East Timor to drink and eat a lot at funeral ceremonies. Next day I hit the track again, accompanied by a local man to lead the way. By afternoon we arrived at my sister-in-law camp which was not far from Kamedar. While I was resting I started to feel cold on my spine. Malaria was attacking me, then came the fever. Anyhow I was lucky because my sister-in-law had two tablets of Resochin. So in three days I got better and continued my journey to Kamedar reporting to Hermenegildo Alves. He told me to stay there, working at the radio post. As there was an area of palm wine I did not mind to stay. My two younger sisters were also there and my niece Dulce and few other girls wearing dresses. It was a novelty, because during a period I saw only women wearing sarongs with little knowledge of hygiene. That was October 1976.

A week later I accompanied Joarquim Nascimento to Feuk-Rin. He was going there to chair a meeting of the Local Committee. But after three days no one came. Joarquim left, telling me to stay in order to get the result of the meeting. Meanwhile I was staying with Felomena enjoying my time, being careful to withdraw at the right time, avoiding being a "father" at the wrong time. I spent over two weeks in Feuk-Rin as nobody came to the meeting. Arthur Nascimento, the Fretilin secretary there told me to go back. I think he did not like my way of entertaining her sister-in-law. So I had to return to Kamedar by horse this time. When I reported to Hermenegildo that the meeting has not been held he didn't care either. In Kamedar was the Fretilin Defence Department, Hermenegildo Alves was then the Deputy Minister for Defence. There were about twenty armed men. Everything we used to drink palm wine and dance with the local girls. Alves' wife used to insult him in front of many people, but usually Hermenegildo put her to sleep with beating and then back to the party. The local girls had no excuse to get away. Normally the armed men dance with the guns and whoever did not want to entertain them would be jailed. I did not like the way, but I had to survive, so I went along with them. Some of the girls became mothers.

In November I received a letter from my brother Nuno, telling me he was going to marry on the 6th and wanted me to go to his wedding. On the 3rd of November I left Kamedar with my sisters and niece Dulce, all riding horse. We arrived to Nuno's camp. Somewhere in Ossu by midnight on the 4th. It had been nearly a year I have not seen my mother. She looked very old, sick and skinny, I could not help myself crying. My sixteen-year old brother Gui was only bones and skin. My sister Licinia was in a poor shape too and my nephew Arthur Jorge was not so bad. He was four years old. I got very sad to see my beloved ones so crippled and my brother Nuno was also very skinny I thought he could not do much on his wedding night. In the morning we went to Nuno's family camp. His girlfriend Teresa was a nice girl and is the older sister of Vicente Reis. So she was about five years senior to Nuno.

Next day the 6th of November, by late afternoon, Vicente Reis arrived with a large delegation to celebrate the wedding Fretilin style. It seemed so ordinary. As Vicente Reis was Teresa brother, I have no words to explain that foolish ceremony. Anyway they were announced husband and wife. After the ceremony it was served some dinner with a lot of palm wine to go with. After dinner it was played a cassette player and we danced. On the 8th Father Carlos arrived from Laleia and next day he made the wedding ceremony on Catholic way. Few days later, we left my brother. On this trip back I took my mother with me, because Barike had more food. This time it took us four days to get to Kamedar. It was very difficult to my mother due to her ilness. Once in Kamedar my mother stayed at the camp of my sister-in-law. By Christmas 1976, the food started to disappear, so I made several trips with Antonio Mata-Koi to Lacluta, Feuk-Rin, and Kacae-Uma to get food. But it was very difficult to find. The few people who had some manioc and corn, wanted clothing not money and we were short of clothing. But usually bargaining I could always get one or two manioc and maize. One had to think that one bag of manioc usually was eaten in two days, while corn could last for at least one week.

At the Fretilin Defence Department, come reports of death every day caused by starvation or dysentery, as people were forced to relay on wild fruits to survive. The situation worsened to February 1977. It was estimated that over twenty thousands people died from starvation in Fretilin controlled areas.

By March the situation improved as the crop season arrived. At the beginning of March I went to Kacae-Uma to get food, and I was lucky to get four bags of corn weighing around fifty kilos and took back to my mother's camp. Soon after I arrived. While I was resting, four armed men i.c. Zacarias, Felomena Alves, Jose Gutteres and Macinto Alves came to the camp to escort me to Kamedar. On the way we met Joarquim Nascimento and two other armed men. Nascimento told me I was under detention and he told my captors to take directly to jail. When I asked him the reason for the detention he shouted that I was a reactionary engaged in mining Fretilin credibility among the population. I tried to get clear about the accusation. He hit me with his gun and threated to kill if I tried to speak again. Once in Kamedar I was put in a hole without anymore speaking. That first day they didn't give me any food. In the morning they opened the lid of the hole and I was told to get out. I felt dizzy with sunlight, then the guard showed me a dish with a small piece of sago porridge. Then he ordered me to clean the rubbish around the huts. At night they put me back in the hole. It has been going like that for four days, until I was transferred to a hut.

A week after Hermenegildo had ordered to build new bamboo huts, so all the militants had to cut down bamboos.The local population were forced to help us to build the huts. The people were very unhappy, because they had to stop working on their farms, which was more useful than building new huts. I was always escorted by an armed guard. In the prison hut my ration was served by a young girl working in the kitchen, who I had screwed several times, and she usually sneak some extra portion for me. Two weeks after being jailed, my mother was also jailed, accused of being a spy, because she told a lot of people that the Fretilin Central Committee was going to hold a meeting in Lalini-Lacluta and Nicolau Lobato was going to attend too. So my mother shared my prison hut for over three months. The Central Committee meeting was held from April to May 30th, 1977.

When the meeting was over, most of the members passed by Kamedar, so we had the opportunity to talk to Nicolau Lobato who then delegated Hamis Bassarewan to solve mine and my mother's: question. So on the 2nd of June it was held a meeting to solve the problem. After hearing both parts, Hamis decided that it is the lack of knowledge of Fretilin doctrines that caused such misunderstandings and we were released from jail. Few days after my release, I went with my yonger brother to Feuk-Rin in order to get some food. Luckily we could get some corn and sago. It rained all the way which made the journey very uncomfortable.

Once back in Kamedar we met my sister Mary married to Policardo Soares, a stupid Fretilin Commander. A week later my stupid brother-in-law left to Bobonaro with my yonger brother Guilherme, who died from starvation in the begining of 1978. Two weeks later my mother asked me to go to Laclo in order to find Mario Bonificio with took A£ 20.00 to change for escudo, but six months had passed and not a cent yet. After arranging a company in the person of John we set foot for Laclo, looking for Mario Bonaficio, a Fretilin member who trying to cheat my mother.

After two days of sun burning track we reached Laclo, marking a new era of Fretilin. We arrived there by late afternoon. I was dead tired, and reported to the local Fretilin committee were a lot of young people from Dili including girls. They gave us some coffee and toasted sago. Then I moved to my old friend Antonio Lemos' hut which was not far from committee's barracks. Old Antonio Lemos was very happy to see me again after our separation in Malus-Hum. He told me his son Egas was away to the seaside extracting salt. Then he prepared some boiled rice with dried meat for dinner. We talked until late night, when I heard drums beat, I asked Antonio what was about. He said it is at the committee, while the Fretilin local leaders that are torturing the prisoners. He added it is a usual procedure every night. I stood up and told him I was to witness in order to be able to tell the world the facts I have seen in Laclo.

Once at the committee, I saw about half a dozen men and two women tied to the trees being beaten with quite big sticks. They were screaming with pains. The women were half naked and the Fretilin bastards were shouting dirty jokes. First I thought they were drunk to do such tortures, but they weren't. Among the local Fretilin leaders, there were two women also beating the prisoners. They were Maria Antonia Soares and Merita Alves. They were just torturing them for pleasure, because they didn't do any interrogation. The tortures lasted for well over two hours, one of them used a burning stick to burn one of the woman's breast. The woman's name was Maria de Fatima who died two weeks later, as her all body wounded and infected. When I went back to the barrack I couldn't sleep, thinking how far the Fretilin had gone with their sadistic behaviours. Even the female militants beated the unlucky prisoners.

While away the time I used to play cards with Antonio Lemos, although it was not allowed by Fretilin, and used to go to the river to catch fish. Three days after I had arrived to Laclo, Egas Lemos came back from seaside. He was very thin. I was happy to see him, but at the same time I was sad to see him in so a miserable state. The tortures in Laclo was being held every night when I was there, always at night time at committee hut. On the fifth night, there was an interrogation of a man named Celestino Carceres, accused of spionage. Under interroration, that man was brutally tortured. The Fretilin militants used sticks and knives to slice his body into a mince meat. Of the militants Jose Neves from Lalgia, put a burning stick into his mouth cansing Celestino to scream in terror until he felt unconscious. Next day the man didn't confess anything about spionage. He said he was innocent from the charge, which made the Fretilin mad and Meno Alves stabbed him twice between the shoulders killing him. His corpse, then buried in the riverside by the other prisoners.

After that, the militants became calmer and for almost a week they didn't bother the prisoners. It came the time, I had to go to Caitassa to meet Mario Bonifacio, who was going there too, for a

Fretilin Central Committee meeting. I left Laclo with the local leaders, which included the two women, Domingas Soares and Merita Alves. We all walked on foot, and by night we reached Betulala, where we spend the night. I slept next to Merita, expecting to have a good night, but after heating her up, she said she could not do it because she was red. Well, bad luck.

Next day we moved on to Caitassa, that was not far. There I met Nicolau, and many other leaders of Fretilin, but Mario Bonifacio arrived only the next day. When he saw me, he called me and gave me seven hundred escudos for the A£ 20.00; then I left for Alarico's camp some thirty minutes away. I had to meet Alexandre, as his father asked me to get permission to let him go to see the old man for a while. I found Alarico quite old and skinny, his wife was pale due to a recent malaria, and Alexandre in a good shape.

While Augusto Vas was quite fat and dirty as usual. When I arrived there Alarico was about to leave for Caitassa for the meeting, so he told me to wait for him in the camp until he gets back within two days. The food there was very little, it consisted mainly of wild beans, that has to be boiled seven times before eating, if not, it can kill as happened to several people. But Alarico himself had rice, it is shocking, because he ate in front of us, which made us very humilliated, feeling miserable like a hungry dog. After lunch Alarico left for Caitassa. It made me good, because I could talk freely with Alexandre Lemos.

At Alarico camp, the security guards had been increased to six armed men and a Chinese, Aseng had joined the team, to repair watches and radio sets. All the money people pay, file to Alarico's pocket. At the afternoon Manoela, (Alarico's wife) went to the water, accompainied by Alexandre Lemos.

It was late afternoon when Manoela and Alexandre Lemos came back to the camp. Seing Alexandre I told him to be more careful, as there were more man on the watch. Alexandre told me about the risks, but he added he couldn't stop going with Manoela because she always insist with him. After dinner came a group of local girls and few young men for a party. At the party there was no wine but coffee, it played cassette with Timorese songs. I danced with a young girl about fourteen years old and later I took her to the bush. When we finished at the bush, we come back to the party, Manoela was angry because Alexandre was dancing with a female teacher whose name was Paulina. The party ended by midnight at the request of Manoela, who pushed Alexandre to her quarters, and only by morning he came to our barrack. The next I had nothing to do and just lay on the barrack for all morning, hearing funny stories told by Mize, always concerning sex. She even asked me how I screwed the girl the night before. I decided not to tell her anything, due to her little age. Then she offered herself to me, but I refused. I never imagined myself trying to screw an eight year old girl. But she was red with passion and tried to grab my dick and I ran away.

After lunch I went with Alexandre to charge the batteries. Having the opportunity to be alone, Alexandre told me that Alarico was already suspicious about the affair, that's why he was going around with Paulina in order to cheat Alarico. I told him to ask Alarico to go away for a few months to cool down, but he said he had asked, but Alarico would not let him go, as he was needed to maintain the Radio Maubere operating.

The next day Alarico came back from Caitassa, and at night after dinner he called all of us for a private meeting. Alarico started the meeting by mentioning the events in Fuka-Dare-Hum in March 1976, saying he was sorry about that and then he added, I was a very worthy comrade with great Revolutionary talent and so on. With that funny speech I thought he was cooking up something .... then he change the topics, talking about American imperialism, to which Fretilin was fighting. I reckon he was mad already at that time, because only a fool would dare to say something like that. Then he said he married his wife not for the usual love but because they shared same political ideas, which made Augusto Vaz squeezed under the table. He had married over ten years and by that time Minister Alarico was a Public Servant holding a junior position. Well, that what I didn't said, and I was not in a position to make any comment. Alarico, further said, Fretilin wanted to create a communist state based on Mao's doctrine and it would not stop before any obstacle to achieve its target even if Fretilin had to eliminate two-thirds of East Timor population. He said that at the last Fretilin Central Committee meeting in Caitassa, it has been decided to create reeducation centers to concentrate everyone who opposed to Fretilin. He added that at reeducation centers the people must follow blindly all the orders from Fretilin leaders and to improve his spirit of revolutionary. The ones who will be classified as persistent reactionary would be eliminated. In fact, such center had been created in many areas still controlled by Fretilin.

That private meeting went on until early hours in the morning. Before closing the meeting, Alarico showed what he had been cooking for me. An invitation to work with him again. With such previous threats I could not say "no", so I said I was ready to work for him, but I had to take the money first to my mother and bring my belongings. Alarico was satisfied with my answer so he said I could go and come back in six weeks time. I took the opportunity to ask him to let Alexandre go with me to Laclo in order to see his father, which Alarico agreed.

The next day I and Alexandre left for Laclo, where we arrived by night fall. Alexandre's father, old Antonio Lemos was very happy to see his son again after nearly two years. It was the last time Antonio Lemos saw his son. We shared the same hut for one week. Over the week, we spent the time chatting or going to funerals as many people died everyday in Laclo from starvation, tuberculosis or the prisoners killed by Fretilin guards. Then it came the time Alexandre had to go back to Caitassa to join Alarico, so I went with him. The meeting there was not over yet, and every night there was dancing under the clear moon.

At the meeting, Nicolau Lobato was going around with Margarida Sousa, who had a boyfriend as a Fretilin unit Commander, that later was accused of being a reactionary and put in a reeducation center. The guy, Mario Marques escaped in 1978 and is alive in Dili now. With such attitude of Nicolau Lobato, who was then Fretilin Prime Minister, it made me more aware of how hypocrit were the Fretilin leaders. Sebasteao Montalvao had abandoned his former wife with seven kids and got a new teen-ager girl, married on Fretilin regulations. Joarquim Saldanha abandoned his former wife and two kids and married again to Zelia Alves, both were Fretilin members. Joao Bosco Soares left his former wife to marry Filomena Ribeiro who was twenty years younger. Well, I cannot mention all the names here. That explained why Fretilin like to hold meetings, it enabled the members to enjoy themselves and to get new wives. Sexually speaking I was not very successful at that meeting, because Merita got herself a Fretilin Commander and the rest of the girls were taken by the members. Those Fretilin bastards had killed very many people, but it did not make any difference to them, as they carry a normal life, what a normal life?.

At Caitassa meeting, there were over one hundred people, and that area was very short of food. The local population were forced to get food for the Fretilin members whenever at the meeting was out of food. The local people had to go to Laclo to extract sago. One, who never saw the extraction will not imagine how difficult it is. First it had to chop down the palm tree. Next, had to cut it in smaller pieces, then take the hard bark out which required some skill and a very good ax. Next, it had to slice the inner part to dry it in the sun, for a few days, then it had to be toasted over the fire. The next stage will be handed by women, who in turn grind the toasted slices in a carved trunk of tree. Then the grinded powder had to be filtered in a basket by shaking it. Finally the sago is washed for a whole day, before it can be consumed by human beings.

Usually it takes a team of six men and six women's work for a week to get the first portion of sago. And those poor people of Caitassa and elsewhere had to leave their huts to look for sago for their masters, who claimed were working for the people. The local people, usually had to work as domestic servants in their areas for the Fretilin members and Fretilin claims it fights to end with servantry. Many of the population were discontent with Fretilin leaders attitude.. The people used to say that, at the colonial rule if one work for his master, the master would pay and feed him, but with Fretilin, he had to work for his master and feed the master as well a payment. His master usually tell the servant he was in the process of revolution.

On the fourteenth of September I left Caitassa for Laclo. On the sixteenth the Indonesian Forces assaulted a Fretilin military post stationed in the riverside killing four armed Fretilin and destroyed the post. By twentieth of September it came news from Caitassa that, Mario Bonifacio was detained accused of traitor. He was tortured by Alarico himself. After few days of horrible tortures and more Fretilin lower leaders getting jailed Mario Bonifacio confessed that he was a member of secret group prepared to eliminate Nicolau and many other prominent Fretilin Central Committee members. The secret group was headed by Fretilin President Xavier Do Amaral.

After that confession, Nicolau Lobato organized a large force to capture Xavier who was then in Fahi-Nehan with also a large force, numbering to over forty armed men.

As the communication there were difficult, Xavier didn't know about the imprisonment and subsequent confession of Mario Bonifacio and Moniz also.

Nicolau's forces were led by Domingos Santos, a younger brother of Carvarino. This force was formed by about sixty armed men and another contingent of a hundred men armed with traditional weapons, such as spears and arches.

When the forces led by Domingos Santos reached Fahi-Nehan, Xavier didn't know about the mission, so it was easy for Santos to lure him into a meeting, having positioned his men in strategic spots to cover all the area. Even Xavier was the chairman of the meeting. Once everybody was inside the barrack for the meeting, Domingos Santos stood up and pointed the gun to Xavier saying he was under prison.

Xavier was completely surprised and outside Nicolau's men disarmed all Xavier's men without any resistance. The aftermath was going to be horrible. Francisco Xavier Do Amaral closest aides were killed on the spot, all were stabbed or hit with sticks. Many Fretilin leaders with suspicious links with Xavier were jailed and tortured including their bodyguards and military commanders. In the area of Madebeno a whole military unit amounted to over a hundred men were detained and its commander executed by firing squad. In the area of Caitassa itself many people were killed by firing squads or by the leaders themselves using knives. Some died by brutal treatments. The number of the people was never known exactly, because the killing were carried out in several areas far apart. Some put the number over five hundred people, others put the number over one thousand people, but anyhow the number of people killed was quite large.

Xavier was taken from Fahi-Nehan to Caitassa in order to be submitted to interrogations. Need not to say he was firmly tied all the way, the ropes cut deep his muscles.

Once at Caitassa, Xavier was received by Alarico who punched him so brutally, sending minuscle Xavier to unconsciousness. Soon after he awake from the forced sleep he submitted again to more tortures, which include Burnino stick in the backside. Xavier was bleeding all over, when Alarico decided he was ready for interrogation. It wasn't any more difficult for Xavier to confess his plots. He gave all the names involved and he even included some names which he disliked, making a terrible shock to Fretilin, as it found out, how large was the plot of Xavier. At the time I was in Laclo, which enabled me to know everything at first hand.

In Laclo itself few dozens of people were jailed including women, some were leaders of O.P.M.T. (Popular Timorese Women Organization). These women were terribly tortured and most of them could not stand the horrible tortures and died. The wife of Xavier was tortured and had her hair shaven and she was forced to screw with the guards. In Laclo an O.P.M.T. secretary, Maria, who was a nice looking girl was forced to screw with the local leaders and guards, she was later stabbed by Domingos Casceres. From everywhere it came news of Fretilin brutalities.

Feeling uncomfortable in Laclo I decided to go back to Kamedar joining a group that was going there in order to get food. The trip back was quite good, as we had enough food for the trip and in Cribas I shot a deer, which we exchanged half of it with manioc. Once in Kamedar I was surprised to see the burn out barracks, that were destroyed by a recent Indonesian forces attack. Hermenegildo was away to Enculy for a meeting with other Fretilin members. The Fretilin Defence Department had moved to Wabi-Kucun some distance from Kamedar. As soon as I arrived there I noticed many things had changed.

My brother Antonio was jailed in connection with Xavier and about one hundred and twenty people from Laclubar were jailed. The Fretilin secretary had been shot. The prisoners were in very bad shape, and it included to Fretilin lower leaders from Laclubar. All of them connected to Xavier's plot. More than eighty prisoners had been transferred to Cacae Uma on the coast, which was a Fretilin reeducation center. Few days after I have arrived, my brother Antonio and the rest of the prisoners also were moved to the reeducation center. The center's leader was Fernando Filipe, better known as F. Mau-Kuna. My mother and sisters had moved to Nu-Tetuc in Lacluta. So I went to Lacluta to join them. They were living in an abandoned hut and food situation was very bad. They were assisted by Jacob Guterres who was a nurse from Venilale. Jacob was living also in an abandoned hut with his family.

When I arrived, they were very happy to see me, because my mother though I had been jailed in Laclo. It was my mother who told me that Alexandre Lemos had been killed along with Augusto Vaz. The reason for both killing were that they tried to radio contact Dili, which is false. According to Jaime Pereira who went to work with Alarico, had told me here in Dili a different story. Jaime said Alexandre was killed by Alarico himself with a strick in the head. He was caught by Alarico's bodyguard laying half naked with Manoela, then the bodyguard reported to Alarico, who told his guard not to tell that Alexandre was found in his bed, but, was found trying to contact Dili.

So in the afternoon when Alexandre went to store the Radio in the safe, he was stopped by the bodyguard Luciano who pointed the gun at him. Then Alarico came out of the hut and hit him twice in the head, killing him instantly. Then Alarico called Augusto Vaz, ordered his men to tie up with ropes to a tree. After he had been tied to the tree, Alarico started to punch and kick him, accusing him of traitor, and then left him tied on the tree for all the night with Alexandre's dead body in the front of him. Next morning the guard freed Augusto Vaz to let him dig a hole to bury Alexandre Lemos. After the burial he was tied again in the tree and tortured again by Alarico himself. According to Jaime Pereira, Augusto's face became very swollen and had a deep cut in the head. When the sun was realy hot, Augusto asked for water, but Alarico didn't allow anyone to give him water.

By afternoon Alarico renewed the brutal treatment using this time a stick to punish Augusto. This one shouted to Alarico to shoot him, but Alarico said, "don't worry Mr. Vaz, you are going to die but slowly," which made Augusto to insult him, but Alarico stopped and left him for the second night. On the third morning, Augusto Vaz was in very bad shape, one of his eyes was closed, and the lips were wounded. Expecting the approach of death, Augusto Vaz as soon as he saw Alarico coming he insulted him, shouting, "Alarico, bloody son of a bitch, Cornuto, Alexandre Lemos had fucked and I myself had fucked your daughter in the ass." Bearing such insults Alarico ran to him and stabbed poor Vaz several times in the chest and stomach, killing him. Still, according to Jaime Pereira, Augusto's dead body was left tied to the rope for the whole day and night and burried only the next day.

I was very sad to hear from my mother, about the murder of my dear friend Alexandre Lemos. He had left his wife and two kids in Dili, with his mother and the rest of his family. It saddened me most as he had died to satisfy a spanky bitch. As I have said, my mother and sister were short of food, so I hired two horses and moved to Natar-Bora to get some corn and sago. I made the journey myself, because I knew the way. I left Nu-Tetuc in the early morning.

The trip wasn't so bad as I rode on a horse trailing the other one. In Natar-Bora I met Antonio Mata-Coy, a young man who used the work for my mother as a domestic servant, and continued to work for us, despite all the Fretilin doctrines. Antonio was working in a rice field belonging to Joao Brito, the local Fretilin commander. Next day both of us went to see Joao Brito, and after I had explained my purpose of the visit, he agreed to give us some rice, corn and sago and also some salt. In all Joao Brito gave us four bags, two bags of corn and two bags of sago; salt was only a litte. We still stayed another day in Natar-Bora to rest the horses. Antonio had a black horse with him, which he had caught in Mane-Hat.

In Natar-Bora I met old Filomeno Branco who used to be the administrator of the country of Barike. He had been married to a young girl and live miserably, suffering from chronic malaria, as Natar-Bora was infested by malaria all the year round. We left Natar-Bora by sun down, as it was full moon, and the trip wasn't so hard because it was fresh.

We reached the river side before climbing the mountains. We walked all the river to the spot where it started the mountain track. There I decided to rest for the rest of the night. It wasn't quite a rest as we just sleep on the sand on the smelly rags used to sadled to horses. We got up by day break and prepared the horses for the last part of the journey.

We reached the abandoned town of Barike by noon, where Antonio climbed on a coconut tree to get some young nuts to relieve our stomach. After getting refreshed we marched on through the dirty trail to the next river, where I had some friends living there. We arrived by two o'clock.

There we rested again, intending to move forward, but my friends insisted to spend the night with them. Rosalina was there, with promising eyes for a good night, I though it was better to stay. That Rosalina had an affair with a Fretilin local leader who gave her a son. Previously I had in her camp and made love to her. At the new camp we all slept in the same barrack, including her father and mother and brothers. As we couldn't do it on the barrack, we sneaked out to the bamboo trees and done it there. It wasn't very pleasant as mosquitoes keep beating my ass, but it was better than nothing. Next day her old father, noticing the scratches on my knees, commented happily that he was going to have a clear skinned grand son, which made me ashame, and I had to say something. I admitted to the old man that I would return one day to plough for him, as it was a custom for the son-in-law to work for the father-in-law. He was happy to hear that from me, but I didn't feel any good, because I knew I would never marry his daughter.

After breakfast we prepared the horses and hit the trail to Nu-Tetuc, where we arrived by afternoon. Two days later I went again with Antonio to Barike in order to kill a head of bull which belonged to my brother Antonio Horta. There in Barike, we camped with relatives of my sister-in-law who helped us to kill the bull with spears. We cut the bull and dried the meat for two days. Meanwhile I was getting very sick with malaria. Once we had the meat dried we put it on the two horses and made our journey back to Nu-Tetuc. This journey, despite being a short one, it was very hard, as malaria was attacking me badly and no medicine available. I had to stop several times along the way, when the desease forced me to shake, and followed with high fever. When we finally reached Nu-Tetuc I was really sick and weak.

While we were away to Barike, my mother was notified by Fretilin local leaders, that we could not camp there any longer, because that was considered a war zone, and the secretary had added that being a relative of a Fretilin leader, my brother Jose Manuel Ramos Horta, we had to give the example, to move out quickly. As we had nowhere to go, my mother suggested we go to join my brother Nuno in Way-Mori. As I was sick I agreed. Thus, few days later we moved again. I hardly could walk, and when we reached the local committee I could not go any more. So my mother spoke with the secretary Augusto Fernandez to let us stay at the committee until I get better, which he agreed. So we stopped there. For the whole month of November 1977 I stayed in bed, when by then one of my brother-in-law got me two tablets of Resochin, which was enough to cure the bloody malaria.

As soon as I got better, we all packed up and moved to Wai-Mori. I could not walk. So I went on a horse with my four years old nephew Arthur Jorge. In Wai-Mori, we started to work in a rice field to prepare for the next planting. Twice a week I used to go to Nuno's corn field which was far away, taking a whole day to get there from Wai-Mori, and another day to get back.

Boy, it was terribly hard, as at that time there was no food around. Suddenly both my sisters and my mother also got malaria and I had to stay home to look after them as my sister-in-law was away in the rice field. And the food stock was becoming very short, I decided to kill our old horse for proteins. At first the girls and Mom, were contempt in eating horse meat, but they had to do so, when I roasted the smelly beefs with salt and chilly; luckily they got better quickly. My mother had an ampul of Resochin but it was only reserved to her four year old grand son Arthur Jorge. Even when I was really bad in Lacluta she would not give it to me, which I understand.

Soon after they got better they returned to the rice field and my sister Aida had the silly idea to get an injection of B complex, long over due, which caused her an abcess and had to stay home nearly three months with the permanent assistance of Antonio Vieira, a male nurse. By Christmas time the food situation in Wai-Mori worsened and many people died from starvation, particularly children and old ones. On the Christmas night I was chocked when Vicente Reis and Carvarino ordered the local leaders to make a party, and forced the local population to give food for that. It amazed me a lot, because both Vicente and Carvarino knew about the starvation, as everyday there were reports of death in Wai-Mori and in some aggregation the number of death averaged to five. And there were twelve such aggregation in the committee of Wai-Mori. After Christmas, the starvation reached calamity proportions, forcing the leaders to mobilize the people to the south coast in order to extract sago, but even there a lot of people died, because they were too weak to work.

Meanwhile I was called to work in the committee of Lacluta, to hear news broadcast, and to teach English to Fretilin militants. But I never teached English there, because there were no books, no papers, no pens.

In February 1978, I was selected to go with a group of militants and prisoners to get sago for the comissariat. It was a good task, as out to the comissariat the people had a lot of palm wine. The leader of the group was Anibal Araujo. And for the first few days we worked near the comissariat, going back for the night, but later we had to go far to get palm trees good for sago and so we camped out. Then Anibal was transferred to Dilor, where Fretilin had a reeducation camp with a lot of prisoners mainly from Viqueque. Then, Calsona, took charge of the team.

When Calsona was in charge, we usually exchanged sago with goat for our own consumption. Sometimes we trade for a dog or a pig, not mentioning palm wine. At that time I increased my lost weight. We worked around the area of Lacluta for over three weeks, when the team was called back to the comissariat, where we were instructed by Joarquim Saldanha to go to Dilor with the remaining prisoners to join the others in the reeducation center.

Two days later a group of about twenty prisoners and I, Anibal Araujo who was back in the comissariat to report about the works in the center and Elias left for Dilor. I and Anibal passed by his camp in Loho-Tutun while Elias led the prisoners directly to Dilor. All the way to Anibal's camp where he had his family, we walked under heavy rain, and as the trail was skiddy and mostly climbing we fell several times and it was getting very cold. When we finally reached Loho-Tutun, it was dark already, and I was really starving and wet to the bones. Anibal's family were out of food and had only wild beans and bamboo shoots which we had for dinner, after we got ourselves dried in the fire. Before going on, I want to mention something about Anibal.

Anibal Araujo was formerly an administrator in Wato Carbau and seemed to be a hard liner Fretilin militant by then when Fretilin took control of Dili and subsequently dominated the majority of the island, he became the Military Commander of Viqueque. When the combined forces of U.D.T. and Apodeti assisted by the Indonesian volunteer Force recaptured Viqueque, Anibal escaped to Same with some thirty armed men. There in Same he escaped to Barike when the Combined Forces recaptured the town. In Barike he did not fight the Combined Forces when it was in Barike for a few days.

By May 1976 he was transferred to Dilor, but refuse working on corn field to maintain his family in Barike, he stayed on there until April 1977. When Fretilin Central Committee held a big meeting in Lalini-Lacluta, he was accused of reactionary and jailed in Wai-Mori. While he was in jail for about six months, his family had moved to Dilor to live with his brother Oscar Araujo who was the Fretilin member leader there. Meanwhile, his wife had an affair with the local Fretilin Commander, whether she was forced or willingly I do not know. But that love affair was discovered by Anibal, when he was released and from then on, Anibal never spoke to his wife again.

Leaving Anibal's camp after a quick breakfast, rapidly we reached the river bed and follow it a long way down. By lunch time we were still walking on the river and only well after midday we hit bush trail covered with tall grass. It was about four o'clock when we reached the rendez-vouz spot with Elias and the prisoners, in a populated area, where the people kindly served some rice and dried meat. When we finished eating, it started to rain heavily but it did not last long, making the trail muddy and skiddy. As soon as it stopped raining, we hit the trail heading towards the reeducation centre. As some of the prisoners were sick and weak we walked slowly, despite Elias intention to go faster in order to get to the centre before dark, but myself and Anibal opposed because we had been prisoners ourselves. By dark we arrived to the centre. I found the barracks over crowded by prisoners with many sick among them. Then, we handed over the prisoners to the man in charge, Lourenso Boaventura, who was also the local secretary. By late night, we were served some fried sago and dried meat. Then we slept in barrack full of mosquitoes.

Next day I woke up very early. But the prisoners were already ready to go out to work in the fields. Many of them showed big wounds in their feet and all of them were skinny, with signs of brutal treatments and malnutritions. I became sick and disgusted. Then came some people of the local population to work with the prisoners, even these people were in miserable shape, wearing only pieces of dirty material around their waist covering only the tools, and the women were mostly topless with their breast hanging like two pieces of dried meat.

In Dilor around the centre, there were also some four hundred new arrivals from Maubisse, who have arrived over a week ago and death by starvation had cut the initial number to three hundred and twenty four fleshless human beings, reminding me of the pictures of Nazi camps. So far in a week the newcomers from Maubisse had died seventy six of them and everyday four to seven die. The cause of death is always starvation and dysentery. After a small breakfast I went with Anibal Araujo to the camp where the prisoners were working under the burning sun, ploughing the rice fields to feed the Fretilin leaders. They were watched by several guards, two with fire arms and about a dozen with spears to prevent the prisoners from escaping.

On the way back to the camp Anibal expressed his disgust over the conditions of the prisoners and mentioned his discontent for Fretilin brutalities and hypocricy. He suggested to run away to Viqueque to join the Combined Forces. Deep inside me, I was willing to go, but I just shut up, because I knew Anibal did not like the Mestizos like me, and Fretilin had spread a lot of informers to catch would be traitors to their case, and Anibal at least was well-known as a false friend. I could not stand any more, living there, seeing everyday the poor prisoners. So the next day I pretended I was sick and I was going back to the commissariat, as up in the mountains there were not so many mosquitos.

Within the three days I had been at the reeducation centre, two prisoners had died from malnutrition, four from malaria and one from tuberculosis. The newcomers from Maubisse had died another fourteen of them, bringing the total of deaths up to ninety. There were no children among the people from Maubisse, as the children did not dure the march to Dilor, dying along the way. I went back to the comisariat with Moises Piedade, a Fretilin member from Loho-Tutun who came to Dilor to inspect the works. Moises made the trip riding on horse, while I walked on foot. It rained most of the way and the river was overflowing and dangerous to cross, but I was used already to cross overflowed rivers, so I did it. We finally reached Loho-Tutun by dark and after fetting dried in the fire, the people there served us some sago and coconut.

Next day I asked Moises to get me a local man to lead the way to Lacluta, where I arrived the next day because of heavy rain. At the commissariat I reported to Joarquim Saldamha, telling him that I was ill and he told me to rest. There at the commissariat I was surprised to meet Father Carlos, an old Catholic priest, who at night brought me the ration dinner. I asked Father Carlos, why he was at commissariat and he said Fretilin leaders had forbidden him to do his priesthood services and ordered him to stay within the commissariat for the time being. At the commissariat he had to work as nurse and distribute food to the sick ones, which he did with joy. Still pretending that I was sick I asked Joarquim to let me go see my mother and he let. Meanwhile came news from Dilor that Anibal had disappeared. Nobody thougt he had escaped because it was rainy season and he could have been dragged by over flowing rivers.

When I reached my mother's camp in Wai-Mori I was glad to see her in good shape as wellas my sister and nephew. We had a good harvest from the corn field and every day they could eat corn in enough quantities. It was April 1978, I stayed with them for two weeks and I left when I received a message from Fretilin Commissar Abel Ximenes who had come back from Quelicai with his new wife. When I arrived to the commissariat I got sick. But this time no joking. I had malaria.

At night Abel had convened a meeting of all people working at the commissariat. By opening the meeting Abel said he wanted to hear reports from everyone about what one had done during two months while he was away. Well, everybody accused me for not doing anything and Zelia Alves and Elias also added that I had stolen two eggs from the commissariat stock. When everybody else had spoken, Abel told me to say something. Because I decided not to speak, but I was forced to start, I said, "this meeting was convened for the purpose to tell our Commissar one's task during his absence and not to accuse one's fault or negligence. But as everybody had said I did nothing. I believe my report has been made by my comraders who saved a precious time of our comrade commissariat. About the two eggs, yes I have taken and eaten because I thought, was not enough for all of us. I just do not agree with the terms used by comrades Elias and Zelia Alves", and I sat down. My short speech made Zelia quite angry and she stood up and said that as the eggs were very, very rare they were reserved to the Commissar and assistant, her husband, that is why she said I had stolen, and she added I never care to study politics as the others and so on. But I pretended not to listen and then she stopped her silly arguments. To close the meeting Abel told me to work more and improve my image as a revolutionary and not to steal any more eggs from the stock. I wonder when there will be more eggs. After the meeting I went back to sleep.

The day after the meeting the fever increased and I got furunculus in my left armpit, so I had a good excuse to go back to my mother, for another week. Luckily the furunculus disappeared in short time with traditional medicines and I had to go back again to the commissariat. By then I was fit already. That was May 1978. At the commissariat the food were lousy, only consisted of sago porridge and manioc leaves with rotten dried meat. Sometime a little bit of corn, while on the table of the Commissar, where he sat with his wife, Joaquim Saldanha and wife and Elias's wife but not him, they had rice and corn and manioc everyday. Those bastards would not invite poor old Father Carlos to their table, leaving the seventy years old priest to eat with us the damned porridge. It made me increase my against those son of bitches who tried to convince the population that there was no God. On the 10th of May, Vicente Reis and Carvarino accompanied by their wives came from Katu-Kado for a meeting with the regional leaders and commanders, and my brother Nuno with many female politicians also came.

The first night it was organized a dancing. Filomena was also there. She had come with her sister and brother-in-law. She did not speak to me, because she was engaged to the Barike secretary. The meeting was held in order to discuss new ways to increase production, and to develop new strategies. Meanwhile, there arrived from Maubisse over one hundred starved people with nothing except the dirty rags they wore. Those people had nothing at all to eat, while the leaders at the meeting had rice and meat everyday. The rice was forced supply by Lacluta's population and the meat was a pure theft ordered by the leaders as they instructed some militants to shoot buffaloes belonging to the population. Several times those starved people from Maubisse came to the commissariat begging food, but they were refused and many of them died across the river, only a few meters from the commissariat. From the initial number of over one hundred had diminished to forty by mid June. During the meeting my mother told me to ask Abel Ximenes to let me go to Wai-Mori to help my sister harvest the rice. So I left on the twentieth of May. The rice field was some six hours walking from my mother's camp.

For two weeks, myself and Antonio Mata-Koi transported many bags of grain on our shoulders back to the camp. It was very tiring and exhausting as every morning we had to leave very early to the rice field and there eat rice with pumpkins and walk back, loaded. By the beginning of June, the Security Forces had advanced from Baucau, stationing in a mountain side overlooking Wai-Mori. Then the Fretilin Commanders forbade all movements among the population. A week after the forces had captured and destroyed my brother's company and continued to advance slowly towards Wai-Mori, overcoming all the resistance given by Fretilin Forces.

As the Security Forces were advancing, the Fretilin leaders ordered the population to go back to Wai-Mori-Ana. Then came reinforcement from Barike led by Hermenegildo Alves. Meanwhile, Security Forces had captured Fretilin positions in several points in Dilor and from there they were advancing towards Barike, by the coastal flat land. In face of continuing advance of Security Forces, the Fretilin leaders had ordered the civilian population to go back to Bua-Meke, where many people have surrendered to the Security Forces and assisting them to find the Fretilin positions. All the members from the commissariat had gathered in Bua-Meke to organize a stronger resistance against the Security Forces without success.

From Bue-Meke Nuno got some horses to assist us taking our belongings to Fatu-Kado. Here we had news that Security Forces had also an advancing force from Laleia and stationed in Cairui and from Manatuto they had occupied Cribas.

In Wai-Mori Ana and Dilor many thousands of civilians population and a large number of Fretilin forces had surrendered. In Fatu-Kado I had told some people that soon we will be in Dili eating good food. Next day, myself and my mother were detained as suspects. It was eighth of July 1978. We both were housed with the Fretilin forces with orders not to go out. Next day, by mid-day a number of Fretilin men had brought one man tied strongly with ropes under accusation of spying. The man's name was Mano-Rogo, he was unusually strong and fool. When asked who was his Commissar he said he didn't know. Then came Carvarino and Vicente Reis to question him. But as the man was fool and more over, rather strong, it made them believe the man was really a spy.

Then, Carvarino told the militants to beat the man in order to force Mano-Rogo to speak, but Mano-Rogo only said he had a brother as a Fretilin soldier, named Joao. But no one would believe him. As he was beaten by many people, he screamed with pains. My mother covered herself with the old blanket not to see the torture. The militants kept hitting him with strong sticks until the man lost consciousness tied to a bamboo tree. Then Carvarino ordered his men to pour water on him, which made poor Mano-Rogo to regain consciousness, and then he called for his brother Joao, but he would come too late, as Carvarino ordered his men to torture him again. This time he was hit in the head with a strong stroke and he bent his head dead. But the militants kept beating the dead body. Carvarino exited his men, saying that the man was only disguising and ordered his bodyguard to stab his legs, but Manu-Rogo could not feel any more pains, he had passed away. Then everybody left, a bit later Mano-Rogo's brother arrived, a clear skinned man armed with a rifle mauser. When he saw his dead brother tied to the bamboo tree, he touched his brother's head and started to tremble. When he turned his face I noticed no tears in his eyes, but a firm decision to avenge his brother's murderers, then he left. While Joao was away, two Fretilin guards untied the body, dragged to the gorge and throw it down like a doll. Shortly after, Joao arrived with some of his relatives to take away the body, but he was told the body has been thrown away. Joao didn't say anything, he just turned his back and walked away.

After that cold blooded murder, I decided to contact Joao when I could. In November 1978 I had the opportunity to meet him in Dili and then he told me how he avenged his brother's murderers.

Joao told me that when he walked back from the location where they had killed his brother, he told all his relatives to surrender immediately. It wasn't difficult as he knew his way. He met the Security Forces in Bua-Meke and it wasn't difficult for him to convince them to believe his story as the majority were Timorese and from Viqueque with only some Indonesian regular to supervise the fighting.

According to Joao he joined the Security Forces with his mauser rifle determined to hunt down Carvarino and Vicente Reis. After some time they met a fight in the area of Nadar-Bora where he shot dead Vicente Reis with two bullets in the stomach on October 8, 1979 and two days later in another encounter with Fretilin forces he wounded Carvarino in the chest and arms. Antonio-Carvarino alias Mau-Lear was taken to Venilale hospital but few days later he died from the wounds. Joao was in Dili for training to join the old East Timorese Battallion 745. From that time on, whenever Joao came to Dili, he always pay me a visit. I was glad to know he had avenged his brother's murderers, as those two Fretilin leaders were responsible for many executions carried out in Laclo at the time of Xavier's capture.

By the end of June the Security Forces attacked Fretilin positions in Fatu-Kado for four days. Meanwhile we were transferred to Mil-Kradel. At Mil-Kradel we had news that Fretilin forces were backed to another position, and had lost its only one mortar and two machine guns, and from Lacluta we had news that Security Forces had captured the ammunitions stock hidden at the top of a mountain.

On the fifteenth of July, Abel Ximenes the Commissar had ordered me to go to jail, where I found Xavier, Ercilia and many others, including women and children. Those women and children were caught trying to surrender to the Security Forces.All of them were in very bad shape, many were only skin and bones. The man in charge of the prison was Oscar Araujo. The name of the prison was "Nakukun" which means darkness. I was escorted to the prison by an armed guard named Lourenco del Cunha. We arrived there by lunch time, but the prisoners only had one meal a day and at night time. By afternoon some Fretilin guards had brought a black man under ropes with his face bleeding. Oscar came to see him and asked his name. He said his name was Mao-Meta, from Laclubar. Then the guards told Oscar why Mao-Meta was caught in the area of Cai-Rui spying for the Security

Forces Oscar asked him if it was trùe. Mao-Meta said "no". Then ordered the guards to beat him with sticks. The man screamed with pains, but he kept saying he wasn't a spy. Then Oscar told the guards to use knife and fire. Salvador, I will never forget this name and date, gripping a long sharp pointed knife, slowly pressed the knife against the soulder's muscle perforating it and left the knife. The man screamed like hell, bleeding but he said he wasn't a spy. Then Salvador pulled the knife out and did it again on the other shoulder. But the man kept saying the same. Then Salvador perforated the muscle between the elbow and wrist on both arms. Mao-Meta was really strong to endure such torture without losing consciousness. Oscar told him if he confessed he was a spy they would stop the torture, what made Mao-Meta to admit that he was working for the Security Forces.

I thought they were really going to stop but once he admitted, Oscar punched and kicked him several times and told the guards to keep torturing. Then another guard named Jose Soares cut Mao-Meta's tip of the nose and both ears and forced the man to eat both pieces. As the man refused he grabbed a burning stick and burnt the man's fresh wounds making a roasted meat smell. Mao-Meta screamed to loudly, that made many local people came to assist such horror. Still he refused to eat his own nose and ears, but Soares was determined to force him eating and again he put the burning stick over his head burning the long hair and skin, and then Mao-Meta ate his ears and nose in front of over hundred prisoners and local people. There are hundred of people to witness this brutality of Fretilin. After that, Mao-Meta was tied to a pole inside the prison. At night he asked for water, but the guards did not allowed anyone to give him water. Next day one of the prisoner's child died and we buried him without any cover. The guards had organized a team to go out picking wild beans and leaves for our daily meal. I volunteered myself to go out, because there were a possibility to steal corn or manioc from the local gardens.

As we were picking wild beans and manioc leaves, I quickly picked some row papaw and ate. It was prickly but aleviated my stomach. When we filled the bags, we went back to the prison. Before coming to the prison, my mother had given me a small bag of rice and I kept it very well, reserving for the coming worst time. By night the ration was prepared with rotten sago and few grains of corn, wild beans and leaves, and distributed to the prisoners. To each one there was only a so tiny portion, one could eat it with three or four spoonfull. It made me realized that to survive in such conditions one has to be very alert, cunning and not to care about other's business and to have always in mind a way to get food, and I wanted to survive. I had a little money with me, so I bought some tobacco from the guards. As I was a non-smoker at that time, I used it to exchange for food with the other prisoners. And whenever I could, I always extract food from others' plates. That night Mao-Meta did not get any food, not even water. Next day he shouted for water, only then one of the guards gave him a little water in a bamboo served as cup. He asked for more, but was refused.

In the afternoon, after we came back from beans picking there were shots behind the mountain. We stayed, forcing Oscar to order us to move away quickly as every one was rushing away. It hit a skinny dog with a wooden stick killing it and out it in the pot and hurried away with it. Oscar had stopped in the next mountain with most of the prisoners, waiting for the sick ones who came in slower pace. One female prisoner tried to escape during the confusion. As she was weak, she could not go far and was recaptured and Oscar ordered one of the guards to kill her with a spear. The guards hit her only once in the chest with the large blade. Her body was abandoned. One sick prisoner who could not make his way up the hill was also killed with spear. Then Oscar, the man in charge, the Fretilin member who had our lives in his hand told us, that from then on, whoever was sick or weak, who can not maintain the pace of the march would be killed. We heard him in silence, that made me more alert.

At dark we reached Lalini and camped in an abandoned native village. We did not expect any food and no fire was allowed within the huts, which made impossible for me to cook the dog. The guards with spears also had not much to eat so I talked to the guard in my hut about the dog. They immediately agreed to cook it. So I gave them the dog with the pot. First they put the dog over the fire to clean the hair and then cut it throwing away the guts. When the water had boiled for several time he took out from the fire, taken his share, generously giving me the rest which was still plenty. I kept some pieces in the bag, ate some and I also gave some pieces to my fellow prisoners Ercilia and Cipriano Gusmao.

Next day the assistants of Oscar, there were four of them, organized a group to go out picking wild beans and eatable grass. It was really grass not leaves or whatsoever, and wild banana plants which we could eat the inner part. On the way back one of the assistants told me to be in charge of the cooking. I was happy, because I could have a larger portion. Thus I became the cook of the prison. We stayed in Lalini for five days. On the second morning, Mao-Meta was dying. As most of the prisoners were out on beans picking Oscar told me to dig a hole to bury Mao-Meta who was still breathing, but one of the guards put the cords in the feet and arms and we carried him away. I dug a hole, not enough to put him, but the guard was anxious to finish. Then in front of me and two other prisoners, Matos and Soco-Lequi, cut Mao-Meta's head and legs and put the pieces in the hole. The scene made me perspire in horror. Now that I am writing it down I still shiver, remembering the brutal butcher as just it is happening here. On the way back to the camp I was still trembling. I was going to see similar scene once again. Meanwhile, among the fled civillian population, came some of my brother Nuno's relatives, whom I asked food and they gave me some pieces of fresh manioc and some dried meat.

On the sixth day we had orders to move again. This time there was a lot of cargo belonging to Oscar family and assistant's family to be distributed among the stronger prisoners to carry. As I was in charge of the large pot, I thought, I would not get any more cargo. But after all the cargo had been distributed there was still a large bag of corn left. So I was called out to collect it. It was quite heavy for my strength, and we had no breakfast. We hit the skiddy mountain trail for a long time and by midday we started to descend. The way down was very dangerous due to the wet ground. I fell several times but luckily I did not get hurt. By noon we reached a small river, where we rested for a while, but no food. Then moved on down the river all afternoon until we reached a spot where we found an abandoned village with three small barracks. The prisoners were housed in the two larger huts, but they were not enough room for everybody, so many had to sleep under the trees.

That night no food. I was really starving. So I asked some manioc from one assistant who used to be softer than the others. His name was Fernando Vieira from Los Palos. He gave me two little pieces, which I ate raw. Along the river, there were many civilian population forced to abandon their homes by Fretilin leaders in face of continuing advance of the Security Forces. Next the leaders organized two groups among the prisoners, one to go for wild beans and the other to get fire wood. I took part in the group for wood, as we gather wood from the riverside. I had the opportunity to meet anyone I knew and then I could earn a piece of manioc or a handfull of corn. At that spot we stayed for three days and then moved on. We left by afternoon and as I knew, before hand I pretended that I was sick in order not to carry any load. But the only half bag of cooked beans and the pot. It rained most of the way down the river and by dark we reached Natar-Buku in Barike areas. There we stopped for long hours under the rain on the riverside, while Oscar and his assistant went for a meeting with Abel Ximenes in a nearby hut. I had nothing to protect from the rain but my dirty blanket that soon became soaked wet. Then I got hungry, so I opened the bag and ate a large quantity of beans. Ercilia and Capriano Gusmao who were sitting next to me also got some beans from me. It was very late night when Oscar and his men came back from the meeting, and he told us to get ready to move again.

. As everybody was ready to march there was a prisoner from Laclubar, Lamberto, was still laying on the mud. The guards kicked him to get up, but he could not. He was breathing heavily, signs that Lamberto was about to die. Then Fretilin member Oscar Araujo told Jose Da Cunha to finish him off. The mentioned guard grabbed a big stone and hit Lamberto on the head killing him and his body thrown to the fast flowing river and quickly disappeared from our sight. Then we started to move along the river having to cross it several times. As it kept raining, the river was swollen and more difficult to cross. Coming to a narrower point that had to be crossed three more prisoners were killed. One was a little girl that started to scream loudly in mid river, then one assistant shouted to a guard to knock her out. The guard made his way to the girl and hit her with a stick and her body dragged by the current. The two men were very skinny and weak. Before crossing one started to cry sitting aside, not deciding to enter the water. So one assistant hit him in the back with the spear blade and pushed his dead body to the waters and immediately it disappeared. The second man seing his fellow killed, he walked into the waters, but he was too weak and could not stand the strength of the current. He fell down dragged away by the wild waters.

After that, Oscar told us to move on again. We walked some two hundred meters down. When we came to a really narrow spot, first the assistant Vieira crossed it. While he was in the middle, Oscar told Xavier to go. Knowing that old Xavier could not make it so, I told Xavier to sit on my shoulders and we crossed it. I know by my own experience that when the waters are neck deep, one has to put a load on the shoulders to force the body to go down in order to have feet on the bottom. Otherwise the body will float and dragged away by the current. As we reached the other side, the waters were increasing rapidly, and only two other prisoners were able to cross, while Oscar and assistants guards and prisoners stayed on the other side until day break. When finally the rain stopped and the river became passable, then everyone crossed it.

In the early morning we heard shots further down the river and by day four Fretilin armed men passed by us. Those men reported to

Oscar Araujo that the Security Forces were only less than a thousand meters away. Then Oscar sent a patrol out to check, while we were told to cross the river again and stay hidden in a camping area with many tiny huts, certainly left by previous retreating population. At the abandoned camp one of the prisoners found a bag of manioc which made the rest of us attack him. It was a big fight as everyone tried to get a piece for oneself. Over one hundred starving prisoners fighting desperately, then the guards intervened, punching, kicking and hitting with stick. Some were bleeding, when finally the guards could control the fight. I did not get any piece of manioc but I did not get hurt either. Then came Oscar threatening to shoot a number of prisoners in case there was another fight.

When the patrol came back, the guards told us to prepare to move again. This time we start to climb the mountain trail, that was muddy and very skiddy. We have been walking for around two hours when it started to rain again, but we would not stop. It rained all the way up the mountain. On the middle of the trail one fellow prisoner Porfirio, I remember well his name, because he used to be the most terrible bodyguard of Xavier Do Amaral, could not walk anymore and started to stay behind, as other fellow prisoners was overtaking him slowly, one by one said to him "goodbye Porfirio, and pray for us in heaven."

Everyone knew that he was going to be killed and Porfirio himself also knew that he was going to be killed with a knife or with a spear and his body will be thrown away in a gorge, probably eaten by wild pigs so many in those mountain. The stronger ones will continue to live, until when? That was our great guess.

By noon we reached the main trail, leading to the town of Barike and Oscar ordered a stop to rest. Oscar and the assistants and guards pulled some roasted manioc and started to eat in front of us. It was a great humiliation for me, as that bloody Oscar and the assistants had eaten with me at the same table and had borrowed my dirty blanket when they were sick. But according to Fretilin, prisoner was something under the level of animal, and not to have mercy on a prisoner, even if he was his own brother or father. While we were resting there came a group of people included two Portuguese men, Fonseca and Bento and four girls from O.P.M.T. and some natives. They had come from Dilor, shortly after another group of seven people which included my brother Antonio. After reporting to Oscar he decided that the two groups should join him. After a while, we moved on, again following the maintrail as far as Goiabas-Laran where we stopped again. There another group of forty prisoners who had come from Dilor joined us. Among the new group there was a China man.

There were a lot of people from many places, there. But we were forbidden to talk to them. I saw my brother Nuno's wife and I made signs to her that I was hungry. She understood and then she told a boy to go away. I could not even speak to my brother Antonio, because he was free and I was not. My brother was eating corn flour, seeing him eating I asked some from him and I got a tiny portion, which I had to shake a bit with Cipriano Gusmao. It did not help much. But soon the boy sent out by sister-in-law arrived with half coconut, one banana and two pieces of fresh manioc. You do not imagine how many fellow prisoners who came to me begging for a tiny piece. But I decided not to give anyone, because I need those miserable stuff to endure harder times ahead. I am not going to die stupidly like Porfirio or the others.

I was determined to survive and keep strong so I kept all the food to myself. We stayed at the top of the mountain until dark, when Oscar came back from somewhere to tell us that we were going to spend the night there. It was windy and cold, the ground was wet and we had nothing to cover but the old dirty blankets. Many of the fellow prisoners had really nothing to cover their skinny bodies. The little children prisoners also had nothing to cover, but they did not cry or complain, surely they knew, nothing could help them. I was going to give them some of my food, but my sense of survival was stronger than humanitarian feelings and I kept still, sitting on a large leaf. My back started to ache, and I decided to lay on the wet ground. I thought about my mother and sisters and my little nephew, where could they be? Have they anything to eat?. Were they still alive? It had been long since we were separated in Mic-Kradec and I never heard about them. Those thoughts tormented me through the cold night. To worsen the already miserable conditions, it started to rain, a light and persistent rain. In the morning the guards put all the prisoners in line to march again. As soon as we started to move, we heard an intense fusillade over the side we had come from the day before and sound of shots in front of us.

I thought we were near the Security Forces, but soon I realized that the surrounding mountains worked as an echo box bringing the explosions far out. We started to move down the hill in a smaller trail and then we came to an abandoned village, where we saw many armed militants and my brother Nuno was their commander. He was there with all his in-laws. We stopped there for a while to be distributed cargo to carry. While we were waiting, Nuno's wife gave me two oranges and three pieces of manioc. My cargo this time was half bag of corn which I should carry and give to Fretilin people in the next village. After eating the manioc and orange I felt refreshed and revigorated.

After the distribution of cargo we moved again, hearing the shots nearby. When we reached a creek, we started to hit the mountain trail again and for many hours we walked steadily on the trail until we reached another abandoned village with many oranges trees full of nice yellow fruits. After Oscar and his puppets had picked enough for themselves he allowed some prisoners to get oranges for all, limiting two oranges for each prisoner.

As we all had eaten the two oranges Oscar allowed two more fruits for each one. Fonseca, the Portuguese man shacked a lot of oranges for me, which I filled my bag. After nearly one hour, we marched on again, taking the down trail to get the river. At the last stop, Oscar had released about fifteen prisoners, and divided the prisoners in groups of ten with a released prisoner to be responsible for the group with the assistance of one guard armed with a spear. My group was headed by an ex-nurse and Fretilin Sub-Secretary in Turiscai. He was jailed for having complained about Fretilin brutalities in Vemasse against local population. His name is Gabriel De Deus and he is alive in Dili. He was quite a good old man. We reached the river and rested there for a while before moving on again, climbing another mountain and reached the village of Karau-Monu by dark.

It was raining and we had to stay under the trees where no huts for us. The village was over-crowded with a lot of people. In face of that Oscar told us to move on to the next village. The narrow trail was very dangerous, and so we walked in slow pace, as it was also dangerous for the Fretilin animals. When finally we reached the next village Loho-Ain, it was possibly midnight. There, the assistant asked for the cargo we had received the previous day. Some gave the cargo but I did not.

I had distributed the corn to some fellows and kept enough for me. I counted on their disorganization not to get caught. So I was not, and made myself a good reserve of food. Next day, one of my fellow prisoner was found dead. He got a dysentery caused by the oranges. He was too weak to stand the disease without any medicine. As we had to leave immediately his body was cut in three parts, thus the hole needed not to be large.

We hit the trail to Mic-Kradec. On the way a four-year old prisoner died in her mother's hand. The child was buried quickly on the side of the trail. Her mother did not even cry. The child also died of dysentery. In Mic-Kradec we stopped for over an hour. There were a lot of coconuts and oranges and Oscar told the guards to get enough fruits to distribute for us, five oranges and one coconut each. Since we left Natar-Buku three days earlier, we did not have any solid food, which made a lot of prisoners very sick and hardly could they walk. After some rest in Mic-Kradec, we moved again, heading to the coast. The trail now was flat and muddy. After long hours walking without stopping, it started to rain, and it would not stop until Natar-Bora. Here Oscar finally ordered a hault, so we could rest. I was badly tired so I just lay down on the wet ground, praying for God to end as quickly as possible this nightmare.

I never imagine the hardships would get so far. In front of us, we see no food and no one knew when we are going to have the next meal. I had my small reserve, but it is not going to last long. Then came orders to move again. It was dark. But as prisoners we could not claim. We had to follow the orders of our masters, because they had our lives on their hands. We moved through the muddy path, across swamps, crossing several swollen creeks, until finally we reached a corn field with a large store house, to accommodate up to forty people. But we were over one hundred prisoners plus some thirty assistants and guards. We sat on the barren floor waiting for some order that will certainly come. One of the assistants told us to make a fire and collect some manioc leaves and some eatable grass to cook for us. So I took again my position as the prison cook, while few prisoners went out to collect the grass, which Fretilin leaders called it Lugumes. I went to fetch water and boiled over the fire, then the same assistant gave me about half a kilo of maize to add to the grass. When my fellow prisoners brought all the leaves and grass, I put them in the pot out washing.

After it had been boiled for several minutes I called the prisoners to distribute the vegetarian soup. It was only enough one large spoonful for each prisoner. As I was the last one to get my portion, I always had a better part because usually the maize stay in the bottom, which was better than having the whole pot with grass only. So after three days I had a quite good hot meal. I got to say it was a good meal, because the majority of the prisoners had only grass. After that poor meal I slept heavily, despite the millions of mosquitoes. I was really exhausted.

I did not feel the bad smell of the fellow prisoners' wounds. Many of us had big wounds, infected, some even had germs and released a so stinky smell. One can not imagine if one had never saw it by oneself. And I had to eat my meals just beside that stinking wounds everyday and night since my imprisonment in July.

Next morning without any breakfast, the assitants told us to get ready to move again. While we were getting ready I saw Oscar and the assistants eating roasted manioc, which made my stomach to complain and felt cramps. But what could I do. I had some oranges in my bag, but I wanted to keep them for worst occasions. After they had finished their breakfast we moved again on the swampy trail to We-Clara-Oan where we arrived by noon.

Still no food, I was really straving then. So I decided to eat one orange. This time,, first I ate the peel with a little salt, afterwards the inner part. I was madly willing to eat another orange more, but I restrained from doing so, because there in We-Clara-Oan, we were expecting very hard times. All the afternoon we just sat in our barracks without nothing to do. Many of the fellow prisoners had to drink only dirty water to fill their empty stomachs.

Next day, Oscar organised a team of stronger prisoners to chop-down palm trees in order to get sago. It was a fifteen men team. For start they were distributed some portions of maize in order to strengthen them for the job, which is quite hard. While the rest of us were told to gather fire wood, without any food. So we went out to get wood, and then we got some eatable grass and mushroom with which to satisfy our aching stomach. We collected a lot of wood all day until night. Then we could prepare the grass to eat, I ate another orange for dinner. At night it rained again, and the water dripped through the old barrack not letting us rest properly. Next day three prisoners were found dead, poisoned by some mushroom they had eaten. Their bodies were buried in the same hole. After the burial, one of the assistants told some of us to get grass, manioc and sweet potatoes' leaves for our meals. On the coast there were no wild beans, which is found in higher places. Here there were another kind of wild food maek, which requires some two days to roast it slowly, in order to loose its prickliness. But as the prisoners did not have two days to roast the prickly maek, we just put the maek over the fire for half an hour or so and eat it. I tell you man, it is bloody prickly, but starvation was the best medicine against it. That day my brother Antonio gave me a few pieces of fresh manioc, which I ate with such pleasure as someone enjoying a good lobster with butter sauce. Even the peel of the manioc I ate.

We have been eating grass for six days when we changed our diet for sago. I myself was in better condition than many of my fellow prisoners, because I kept the oranges, eating only one each day until I finished with oranges. But I still had some maize to improve the grass ration. When we started to have sago, it was not any better either as we got only the part of sago which is taken out during the washing process. The sago not even the pigs eat it. The sago tasted just like earth and it caused constipation. When one goes to shit, I was a terrible experience, one had to force all the muscle to be able to evacuate, once the first shit gets out it became easier and all the contents of the last meal would come out. It even did not smell, the flies would not sit on it. To help this unusual diet, I used to hunt lizards and snakes which there were a lot around our camp. The lizards and snakes when roasting, smelled like roast chicken and had a good tender white meat. Scorpions and rats were also a good source of proteins.

On the second week there, we had an improvement in our diet as we were supplied with better sago to mix with the bad one.

On the second week one child prisoner of about four years of age died during the night. He was buried by his uncle. His parents were killed in Dilor after being captured by Fretilin militants when they tried to surrender to the Security Forces.

One prisoner tried to escape, but he was recaptured as he was really too weak and starving. After his recapture, Oscar told the guards to tie him on a tree and leave him there.

Next day he was hung in front of us, to show what luck we would get, if caught trying to escape. The dead body was floating like a dirty flag for many hours before burying. When two prisoners were caught stealing corn in a garden we used to pass on our way to get the slices of sago palm to dry in the camp, were tied to two trees and brutally beaten and Oscar himself told a guard to burn their hands. These two prisoners survived and are now working in Viqueque.

By the end of the second week we were about to move again. Then my brother Nuno came with forces. When he saw me, he came to talk with me. When he got close to me he started to cry and I cried also. He said I was only bones and skin. He had nothing to give me he said, because his men also were starving and had eaten nothing for the past two days. Before he left I asked only salt. My brother Nuno had a bullet wound in his left leg. I never saw him again. Before walking away he said mother and the young ones were still alive.

We moved again to another spot not far from We-Clara-Oan. There we just camped on the open sky, as the only hut was occupied by Oscar, the assistants and the four girls from O.P.M.T. At that spot we only stay for two days and no food was distributed. But there I made a small business with people who had come from Soibada to work there. They had a lot of corn and manioc. After pretexting that I was going to shit, I contacted the people and told them I had a good pair of short to exchange for corn. After some bargaining they agreed to give me half bag of corn, about seven kilos, which I agreed, and gave them the pair of shorts.

Back to the camp I put some ropes in the way as shoulder bag strings and by afternoon we moved again. Before the orders to get ready I slept and covered myself with the dirty blanket and screamed as if I was in high fever. When everybody else was ready, one assistant asked me why I was still sleeping. In a shaky voice I told him I got malaria. That convinced him. A lot of cargo were distributed to the others, but me. We walked for a long time crossing several corn fields.

Oscar and the girls had stayed behind. By dark we reached another corn field with a house, built with posts, above the ground.

But it was too small to accommodate all of us. Many had to stay in the open. I found a space for myself. At night it rained heavily for a short time, soaking my fellows in the wet.

Next day Oscar arrived with the rest of the team and moved to some huts just a few yards away, but as we had arrived during the night no one could see them. In the morning I still pretending that I was sick, because we had left a lot of cargo in the previous camp. As soon as we moved to the next huts, Oscar called all the fit ones to go back for the cargo. He called me, but assistant Vieira told him I was sick. When the fit ones had left, Oscar told us to divide ourselves in groups of four and build shelters for each own group. My group was me, Capriano Gusmao, Ercilia and Xavier Do Amaral.

We had to build a larger shelter for cooking also. By noon, everyone had his shelter completed. It was only few large leaves of palm tree on four sticks and two sticks on top. Then we went with the released prisoners to get manioc leaves, grass and some leaves.

Collecting such leaves in the corn fields we usually pick some smaller pieces of manioc left by the owners. The grass which I prepared for all the prisoners, I believe not even pigs would eat, unless the pigs were starving.

After the midday soup, we went out again to get wood to make fire to dry the sago slices. The fit ones had come back by afternoon with a lot of sago slices left in the last camps. At night, some prisoners had to grind the slices while some had to keep the fire alive. I always stayed in the fire team as it was easier than grinding. But at night also had to join the others for grinding. We stopped work at midnight and early in the morning we had to get up at five o'clock and start to work.

By seven o'clock I had to get water boiling waiting for the grass collecting team to come back with leaves and grass for the morning meal. On the second day there we had our first ration of good sago, but it was so little we had to add grass in order to be able to distribute for everyone of one hundred and twenty seven prisoners. In the afternoon my youngest sister had come to the camp to see me. When Licinia kissed me, she cried a lot, shaking her skinny body in deep sobs. When she stopped crying, then she could tell me I was only bones and skin. She had brought me some corn and dried meat which later I shared with my shelter mates. When we had been there for five days, a plane flew over the area, dropping leaflets inviting Fretilin leaders to surrender. As it was only leaflets nobody care and I told my mates, the plane should have dropped bread it would be more convincing.

On the sixth day there, when I went to make fire to dry the sago slices, the assistants told me it was not necessary to do it, and I asked them if we were going to move again, they said yes. All the usual work stopped that day, and we all were expecting to walk far. Oscar had left the camp earlier. By noon, we were distributed sago for lunch and for dinner. It was so little that not even for lunch would satisfy. So I boiled some maize for the trip.

By afternoon, Oscar came back and immediately gave orders to line up all the prisoners. Then each prisoner received forty slices of sago to carry. I carried the pot, plus twenty five pieces of sago. It was bloody heavy. Once, everyone was ready we start to walk on the jungle trail. We had to cross many swamps where mud was knee deep. For long hours we walked and walked.

By dark we came to a clear spot near a creek and camped there for the night. After eating a small portion of my own boiled maize, I slept on a palm leaf. I was quite tired and the shoulders were swollen. Next morning we got up early and started to work again, crossing the creek and made our way into thick bush. After deciding a spot to camp, Oscar told everyone who was fit to line up again. I just sit still, then he called me. I showed him the swollen shoulders that were red already. He told me to rest, when the fit ones left to get the slices that has been left in the last camp. Those who stayed had to clear the jungle in order to build some temporary shelters. But we could not do much with our bare hands only.

By afternoon the fellow prisoners, that went, had arrived with the rest of sago and the carve wood, which were used to grind the sago.

At night, we the weak ones did not get any food, while the fit ones got a meager portion. The same night we started again to grind sago till midnight. I was very painfull for me, but I thought others were in worse conditions than myself, because they had nothing to eat but the second grade sago. Next day, Oscar's family came to the camp and some fellow prisoners had to build a hut for them, and a woman and her four years old daughter went to assist them. We stayed at the camp for only a few days and moved again. We left the camp by afternoon with a small distribution of sago that was said to be enough for two days.

Just before leaving I received from Arthur's wife who was camping with Oscar's family some dried meat and rice from my mother. Expecting a long journey I cooked some rice and maize and put it in small bag. We walked towards Cacae-Uma, passing it by dark. We saw a lot of civillian population camping there. There we stopped for one hour waiting for Oscar, who went to consult Abel Ximenes, the Commissar. When he came back we restarted the journey, walking until very late, camping overnight, already in Dilor area. During the journey a skinny prisoner was stabbed dead by one of the guards because he could not walk any more. When he was stabbed, he shouted like devil in the night.

Next day, we walked again, crossing Dilor river and by noon we stopped in a flowing creek to rest, I ate some of the maize, while most of my fellow prisoners had nothing to eat, as they had finished with the two days ration. After the short rest, we restarted again, crossing then a wild terrain with a lot of swamps and fallen trees. The swamps were very difficult to cross, because in some parts one would sink to waist in the soft mud. In those parts, Oscar and assistants were carried on shoulders by us, the prisoners. We had been crossing the swamp for over two hours, when suddenly we reached a clear area with some civillian population. There, Oscar ordered a hault and told us we were stopping there. All of us were dirty like pigs, full of mud from feet to head and no water around to wash.

After a brief rest, we were told to line up to help civillian population grinding sago. We grinded in two hours shift until day break. Then we had some dirty sago for breakfast, and back to work again. Many of my fellow prisoners hardly could stand. They were beaten by the guards to keep working. My ration of maize was very short and there was no way to get or to steal. After the small breakfast only at night we were allowed again another miserable meal. There was no grass either to put to the sago. After a short rest, we went back to work again, but we were stopped by explosions of machine gun fire somewhere. So we went back to sleep. Next day, we were awoke with kick and sticks inflicted by the guards.

We were told to get immediately ready to march again. Once everyone was ready and in line we took the same trail back again to Dilor without stopping, arriving at the river side by afternoon. We camped under some large trees and no fire was allowed. So we just lay down resting. I only thought about my family, particularly my old mother, and my little nephew.

The whole day we did not get any food. At night I was really starving. Next day Oscar told some twenty men with guards to go back to the other camp to bring the rest of cargo, after giving them some food. While the rest of us did not get any, but he allowed to make fire and get water. So I could wash some of the mud away. Then I boiled the rest of corn and eat. When the men came back with the rest of the cargo, Oscar sent out four guards to check down the river, looking for Security Forces. Short time later the patrol came back and reported to Oscar that the river was clear. Then he ordered the prisoners to form two columns.

I was the last man of the first column closed by an armed assistant, Vieira. In front of me were Xavier and Ercilia. We walked on the river bed in a fast pace. Just about five minutes after we left the camp, the head of the column led by armed guards were shot at. Immediately I jumped to the ground and moved into the tall grass. Many of my fellow prisoners also hide themselves in the tall grass.

I thought, at last the freedom had come. Many of the hidden ones wanted to go and show themselves, but I told them to get easy and check if the ones who fired the shots could be a group of Fretilin who was against Oscar. As it happened in many other areas groups of armed Fretilin killed their leaders before surrendering to the Security Forces. After a while I told the women to go first, because during the excitement it could be dangerous for the men to go out first. As the women went out, the Security Forces men called out for us, saying to come without fear. We are friends. So we ran to them, crying and laughing at the same times. It was the joy of freedom, they gave us good filtered cigarettes. It ended for me nearly three years of nightmare. If I was a writer, I would be writing all my life about my experience under Fretilin brutalities and tortures.

I was surprised to see only natives soldiers, my saviours. Only when the boy's told me to see their commanders, I met for the first time an Indonesian soldier. The Commander was wearing uniform. He must be a Lieutenant or a Captain. There were three other Indonesian soldiers with the Captain. All the rest of the troops were Timorese boys, mainly from Viqueque. The Captain could speak English, and after asking our names, he asked if we wanted to eat. Well, I never imagine I could eat so much, in a split of a second I had devoured eight dishes full of rice and meat. Seing that, the Captain told me not to eat more, because it could kill me, he said. As I was starving for long time, I had to eat slowly until my stomach return to normal. But I could not care, I told the Captain that I did not mind to die with my stomach full.

Xavier Do Amaral ate so much. He could not even stand up and was forced to vomit what he had eaten. Only then I realized that the Captain was right. We slept with the Security Forces there. It were over forty of us, prisoners surrendered in the afternoon, including the mother of Oscar, wife and sister-in-law of Arthur Nascimento. We told the Captain that the women were Fretilin and should be killed, but the Captain said they were fighting to save people and not to kill people, unless they shoot and get killed during the fighting but once is alive in our hands, we do not kill them, thus, it make me admire the Security Forces.

Next day we walked to the beach. At the mouth of Dilor river landed a civilian helicopter from Pelita Air Service, and flew me, Xavier and Ercilia, ended finally the Fretilin nightmare, full of murders, starvations, unjust punishments.

FREE FROM FEAR AND TERROR ....

Arriving in Dili, my sister Romana and her husband were waiting for me at the Dili Airport, and they took me home. My sister hugged me strongly and started to sob. I could not speak, such was my emotion, only at home I could speak, answering all the questions my sister and brother-in-law made. When my sister asked about her little son Arthur Jorge, I just told her not to be worried, because God will protect him as protected me and soon he will come home with his grand mother, my mother.

They gave me a lot to eat, but remembering the advice of the Captain in Dilor I ate only a little. In the afternoon they took me for a drive in their own car. I was surprised to see many new buildings and most of the old dusty road had been asphalted. At night many friends came to see me with small gifts. I could not talk much because I was very weak and the previous night I did not sleep at all, as all the saved prisoners kept talking and eating all night.

Next day I asked my sister to take me to a doctor, because I had my feet swollen and my stomach was aching. Before going to the doctor my sister cut my long hair full of lice and wounds.

The doctor told me, I got malaria and beri-beri and had to stay in hospital for treatment. I stayed in hospital for two weeks and then went home. While I was in the hospital many people came to see me, asking for their relatives who had been in prison with me. Most of them had got sad answers as from the initial thousands prisoners held in Fretilin prison, only very few of us had survived. The majority had been eliminated by Fretilin guns, and many died whether from starvation or diseases.

On the fourteenth of September I left the hospital to commemorate my birthday with my sisters. Meanwhile, the security men had told me, my mother was saved in Natar-Bora, with my nephew, but it was not clear yet, the news. It was thirteenth of September. Only next day, they came to tell me it was true. And I asked my two young sisters. They said, they had not any news yet about them, but will soon save them too.

On the fifteenth my mother arrived to Dili. We all cried when saw poor old mom in very miserable shape. She was very skinny with an infected wound in her feet. She could hardly walk. My mother had to stay in hospital for over three weeks for intensive treatment. The doctor, then told us, if she stayed another week in the jungle, starving probably she could not survive.

By the twenty-sixth of September my two young sisters also arrived to Dili. Their conditions were not so bad, compared to mine and my mother's.

In October I got authorization from the Government to teach English and the Department of Education leased a class room free of charge where I used for private English lessons. I had fifty eight students divided into two classes. Making good money out of the private lessons, I bought a motor-bike by December. The life in Dili was good. In many ways it was better than during the Portuguese rule.

The local Government had carried out a huge task during the first three years of integration. The Government had built two hundred and fifty housing units for the lower public servants, rehabilitated destroyed schools and roads and bridges. Practically the scars of the short fierce civil war had disappeared. Many local boys had been sent to Jakarta, Bandung and other cities to attend higher education institutions.

During the course of year 1979, all the roads in Dili were completely asphalted and more housing units were under construction. Here I want to point the two thousand houses built for the homeless people caused by the short lived Fretilin domination. It was a great job, as the island were out of building materials, which had to be brought in from the rest of Indonesia. In 1979 about one hundred students were sent to other parts of our new country to attend better schools and the number had been increasing steadily. It is an amazing task for the Government to carry out such mission.

On the agriculture, much attention were paid to irrigation channels and upgrade the local cultures. The Central Government had sent higher quality seeds to increase production, but a prolonged drought had caused famine, forcing the Indonesian Red Cross and the International Committee of Red Cross to carry out an emergency relief services to assist many thousands of people in the village, with free distributions of rice, beans and soya milk. A large medical team was stationed in the island to assist an uncountable number of patients. A large hospital was under construction, which was opened in earlier 1981. Medical service and hospital were free of charge and it is still free.

By the begining of 1980, the Central Government had sent two thousand heads of cattle to distribute among the population in several areas, free of charge.

In fishing, the Government also had helped the people with nets and out-board engines and Dili no more had fish shortages. The Fishing Department is studying a prospect to build a cool storage in Dili.

As early as 1978, a television relay station was completed and enabled East Timor to have fresh news, opportunity to learn quickly the national language and be closer to the Central Government. Many of the constructions finished or still under way, carried out by locally established contractors, assisted by the local Government, providing them with large loans with a minimum of interest rate.

There is not doubt, that the Central Government had accepted the petition from East Timorese people for integration into the Republic of Indonesia with full responsibility knowing the great burden, that had to be overcome, to bring East Timor to the same level as all the other provinces. The integration had come in a very grave moment, as the civil war in East Timor had reached calamity proportion, with many thousands of death, misery and suffering. With integration, the complete extermination to the people, carried out by Fretilin was prevented and began a new era of freedom, peace, progress and stability.

Before closing this pages of my experience of Fretilin brutalities, I want to leave message to the Fretilin men who are still outside East Timor and trying to harass our Government with false accusations and propaganda.

To all of you, who always claim to work for East Timor in order to bring its people to prosperity, stability, peace and well being, you should work shoulder and shoulder with the Indonesian Government, in order to gain complete recognition of the integration, as it is the wish of the whole people of East Timor.

As you claim, you prepared to work for East Timor you should come back to this beautiful island in order to give your participation on the great mission, the Central Government is undertaking to bring East Timor to prosperity. There are many fields of work that your participation as a good citizen of Indonesia, in the development for a better Timor will be appreciated.

You should be realistic about the facts. Your foolish adventure, had caused too many deaths and misery in East Timor, the people had suffered a lot and now wants only peace, but peace which was accomplished by the right decision to opt for integration.

You are not loyal to your own people when you say you are working for them, when you keep accusing the legitimate Government of brutalities carried out by yourself. When this Government has done its best to bring peace and stability among the people, it was not an easy task for the Central Government to achieve success in bringing East Timor back to normal. You should open your eyes to the reality and appreciate all the benefits people had received and receiving since the integration.

My last word here goes to my dear brother Jose Manuel Ramos Horta to think about that our mother was saved from a certain miserable death by the Security Forces and so you should think twice, before you speak against Indonesia.

ARSENIO RAMOS HORTA